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VIRGINIA WOOLF'S ANDROGYNOUS QUEST

by



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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled "Virginia Woolf's Androgynous Quest," submitted by William Thomas Corcoran in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

ABSTRACT

Virginia Woolf came to believe that the highest forms of artistic creation are preceded by a merging of the sexes, a form of psychic intercourse, which takes place within the mind of the artist. If this fusion does not take place, the vision or integrity of the finished work of art becomes blurred by a detachable philosophy, directly attributable to the sex of the artist. For the female novelist, struggling into articulation in a literary world dominated by the male, the difficulties of attaining such an integrity are understandably pronounced. Virginia Woolf's androgynous quest is therefore examined on both the personal and artistic levels to show how the successful sexual syntheses partly vitiate the charges of obtrusive feminism and Bloomsbury aestheticism.

The first chapter, by exposing the polarities in Virginia Woolf's creation of character - the rational, egocentric male and the intuitive, integrating female - ominously suggests that the intelligent daughter of Leslie Stephen cannot pretend to treat men and women objectively. Yet the separate analyses of the sexes are not marked by a uniform denigration of the patriarch and consistent deification of the matriarch, so attention must be shifted to those works which are specifically concerned with the androgynous ideal.

The companion pieces, A Room of One's Own and Orlando, in their mingling of self-confession, literary criticism, history, satire and fantasy, are curiously unsatisfying. The special pleading of the manifesto colours the fantasy, so that Orlando's final statement is more feminist than androgynous. The same conflict of interest between a persistent

practical feminism and androgynous idealism is responsible for anomalies in Virginia Woolf's literary criticism. Although Orlando shares a structural weakness with The Years, made necessary by their heroines' moments of androgynous vision, there remains a case for considering Eleanor's sociological androgyny as a more viable achievement. Her fusion of the public and private life, the social and solitary selves, acts as a convincing antecedent to the achievement of the epicene Bernard.

Within the context of Virginia Woolf's vein of lyricism, the third chapter examines recurring images and patterns of symbols which become poetic vehicles for the androgynous vision. The search is for correlatives in the physical world which will structurally combine the opposing elements of intellect and intuition, the male and the female. The centrally significant symbol is that of the lighthouse, which, in its physical proportions, combines masculine substructure and feminine light. Again, Lily Briscoe's painting represents the achievement of both personal and artistic androgyny. The painting is completed only when she feels a potent need for both Ramsays, and consequently reconciles the male and female aspects of her own personality.

Finally, in making the novelist, Bernard, the spokesman and composite of the other selves, Virginia Woolf has made The Waves her fullest statement of the androgynous theory of writing, as well as illustrating a personal philosophy of life. Bernard celebrates the ideal of the integrated artistic personality, where ratiocination and intuition are harmoniously combined. However, since Virginia Woolf's final artist-figure, Miss La Trobe, is signally unsuccessful in repeating Bernard's achievement, the question of Virginia Woolf's personal androgyny remains conjectural.

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Man is both a personality and the cosmos, the logos and the earth the masculine and the feminine. While man remains a sexual being he cannot live in peace and harmony. Masculine psychology is completely different from the feminine. Mutual understanding is difficult because of the fierce, cruel struggle between man and woman. The great anthropological myth which alone can be the basis of an anthropological metaphysic is the myth about the androgyne. It is told in Plato's Symposium, and occupies a central place in Jacob Boehme's gnosticism. According to his Idea, to God's conception of him, man is a complete, masculinely feminine being, solar and telluric, logocic and cosmic at the same time As a sexual, halved, divided being he is not chaste, not wise, and is doomed to disharmony, to passionate longing and dissatisfaction. Original sin is connected in the first instance with division into two sexes and the fall of the androgyne, i.e. of man as a complete being.

Nicolas Berdyaev : The Destiny of Man

That the creative artist should be preeminently bisexual is, of course, natural enough, since such creation demands continually a kind of sexual intercourse within the personality Our argument raises a host of disquieting problems and risks plunging us into a morass of contradictions, but our aim is, really, very simple and very obvious. I suggest a certain blend, a synthesis of the masculine and feminine principles, to be recorded and announced by poetry, as such

G. Wilson Knight : Christ and Nietzsche

He who knows the male, yet cleaves to what is female
Becomes like a ravine, receiving all things under heaven;
Thence the eternal virtue never leaks away
This is returning to the state of infancy.

The Tao Te Ching Text

God created man in his own image ... male and female created he them.

Genesis. 1:27

There can be no male and female; for ye are all one man in Christ Jesus.

Galatians. 3:28

INTRODUCTION

Twin impulses toward identity and unity colour Virginia Woolf's literary output, for "if there is one gift more essential to a novelist than another it is the power of combination - the single vision."¹ Indeed, Leonard Woolf's assessment of his wife's creative activity clearly pinpoints the polarities whose reconciliation constitutes that androgynous achievement where the masculine truth of reason, and the feminine truth of imagination are merged:

... I have distinguished two markedly different - indeed almost anti-thetical phases in Virginia's creative process. This swing of the pendulum in the mind between conscious, rational, analytical controlled thought, and an undirected, intuitive or emotional process almost always takes place where the mind produces something original or creative. It happens with creative thinkers, scientists or philosophers, no less than with artists.²

One mid-century feminist, who could hardly have been anticipating the fantasies of unisex or Myra Breckenridge, offers the serious assurance that

the old conflict between male and female will ultimately reach reconciliation in a new synthesis which is already in sight. The organic type of human being which will emerge from that synthesis may well be the constructive achievement of the next half-century.³

It is the aim of this thesis, however, to trace Virginia Woolf's search for the artistic embodiment of this symbol of wholeness in the previous half-century.

As the epigraphs indicate, the argument for the androgyne can be derived from a Russian philosopher, an English critic with a Christian Renaissance stance, and a Taoist mystic - as much as from the Bible

itself. Further, the ideal of bisexuality was gaining considerable currency at the time Virginia Woolf was writing. Quite obviously, the latest developments in psychoanalysis represented in the writings of Freud were accessible to his English publishers - Hogarth Press. Also, Virginia Woolf's contemporaries seem, in varying degrees, to be concerned with the androgynous problem of the reunification of the sexes within the self.

There is the proposition, shared by Virginia Woolf and (among others) Dorothy Richardson, that the masculine consciousness is essentially intellectual, and the feminine consciousness essentially intuitive. The quest, marked out in Pilgrimage, traces Miriam Henderson's attempts at merging intellect and intuition, each stage resting on symbolic relationships with a carefully ordered procession of males. In the still point where the female artist's intuition is defined against Emerson's masculinity, Miriam comes into her own androgynous heritage. More significantly, she finds herself drawn to Yeats, with his "halting, half man's half woman's adoration he gave to the world ... his only reality."⁴ Even Joyce, with characteristic irony, discovers his own anima below the level of personality, and, like the God of the first creation, materially fashions a mock-androgyne whose name could well be "Molly-Blephen Stoom".

By contrast, Proust's sympathetic analysis of the phenomena of homosexuality and lesbianism, in his Remembrance of Things Past, forces our attention to the peculiar problems of the invert, as distinct from the bisexual individual. The invert, according to Marcel, is a womanly man who is drawn to the virility which he finds in another man. Proust endorses the Aristophanic theory which sees "the race of inverts ...

eagerly connect themselves with Oriental antiquity or the Golden Age in Greece."⁵ While Plato parodies the sanctified Oedipal journey, Proust's approbation of the union of male with male is a glorification of the search for man's intellectual entity. Further, although he would disclaim Freudian influence, Proust's continuing exposition draws on the material examples of psychology, as well as primal, botanical androgyny. Marcel explains:

Inverts might be traced back further still to those experimental epochs in which there existed neither dioecious plants nor monosexual animals, to that initial hermaphroditism of which certain rudiments of male organs in the anatomy of the woman, and female organs in that of man seem still to preserve a trace.⁶

For Aristophanes, as much as for Proust, the significant contrast with the biblical androgynous condition resides in the fact that "happiness for our race lies in fulfilling the behests of Love, and each finding for himself the mate who properly belongs to him; in a word in returning to our original condition."⁷ Within the contexts of the Remembrance and The Symposium the significant reunion is that of the double-male, a deification of homosexuality and consequently of intellect.

Indeed, Freud's account of bisexuality is inextricably related to his views on homosexuality, narcissism, and castration anxiety. Within this complex formulation the male is constitutionally endowed with both male and female psychosexual attributes. Freud also turns to biology for the supporting fact that the urogenital systems of both sexes derive from a common embryonic origin. As Norman O. Brown points out, Freud uses the myth of man's formation "by bisection of an original bisexual creature to suggest that Eros, in seeking ever wider unification, might be seeking to reinstate a lost condition of primal unity."⁸ In addition, the Jungian

concerns with the Collective Unconscious, archetypes, mythic patterns, and particularly the anima concept, have immediate relevance in the arena of androgyny. The Collective Unconscious, for example, is pictured as "a dreamer of age old dreams", an "incomparable prognosticator", and can be "personified as an almost [sic] immortal being with characteristics of both sexes, transcending youth and age, birth and death."⁹

Yet Virginia Woolf appears to disclaim any inevitability in the influence of contemporary novelistic practice or psychological theory. In her review of J.D. Beresford's An Imperfect Mother she establishes a guiding principle which suggests that the present analysis should be substantiated on the grounds of literary aesthetics rather than psychological science:

The triumphs of science are beautifully positive. But for novelists the matter is much more complex ... the question how far they should allow themselves to be influenced by the discoveries of the psychologists is by no means simple Yes, says the scientific side of the brain, that is interesting; that explains a great deal. No, says the artistic side of the brain, that is dull and has no human significance whatever. Snubbed and discouraged, the artist retreats; and before the end of the book the medical man is left in possession of the field; all the characters have become cases¹⁰

Even the most cursory examination of the scientific texts will reveal that Virginia Woolf's female characters who ideally balance masculine and feminine are, in fact, gynandrous, not androgynous.¹¹ "In the ardours of discovery [Beresford] has unduly stinted his people of flesh and blood", so that "in becoming cases they have ceased to be individuals."¹² Virginia Woolf, on the other hand, proposes a private (and thankfully amateur) concept of androgyny which embodies an ideal condition of being, explored in the widely different contexts of fantasy, sociology, and art - Orlando, Eleanor, and Bernard are both individual and androgynous. The vision

which inspires the novelist's art is not, ipso facto, derivative; rather, it represents an anonymous assimilation, an insidious crystallization within the mind of the intelligent receptor. "Life," indeed, "is not a series of gig-lamps symmetrically arranged; life is a luminous halo, a semi-transparent envelope surrounding us from the beginning of consciousness to the end."¹³

In spite of these authorial warnings to avoid the quicksands of psychological conjecture, it is far from easy to ignore the distressing picture of Virginia Woolf's mental condition, so movingly described in her husband's autobiography, Beginning Again. The recurrent breakdowns; the overdose of veronal; the fits of violence; the delusion that the birds outside her window were talking Greek - all attest to the terror of a private, hopeless struggle to remain sane. The reasonable suggestion is that the androgynous quest became, for Virginia Woolf, a form of fictional therapy. In Virginia Woolf's total writing process, private, dedicated self-analysis alternated with inevitable and necessary contacts with the outside world. The picture John Lehmann gives of the proprietress of Hogarth Press points to this composite Virginia Woolf - novelist, literary critic, and pamphleteer:

The studio was an epitome and illustration of Virginia Woolf's double life; her life as an author and her life as a publisher of that author Among the many misconceptions of her that have gained currency since her death, the picture of her as an over-refined précieuse ridicule, a person of etiolated sensibility without humour - or only arch or whimsical humour is the most absurd The passion, the exposed nerves, were a reality all right; but there was another side to her, a practical side, a side of sharp observation and wit about the outside world, that balanced the inward imaginative intensity; and it was precisely that side, to which her work for the Hogarth Press so effectively gave play.¹⁴

On a more significant level the writer must balance all aspects of personality to take advantage of the alternation of intellect and intuition, of privacy and companionship. Otherwise, "the vision becomes too masculine, or it becomes too feminine; it loses its perfect integrity and, with that, its most essential quality as a work of art."¹⁵ One insertion in Virginia Woolf's Diary seems particularly instructive: "I thought, driving through Richmond last night something very profound about the synthesis of my being; how only writing composes it: how nothing makes a whole unless I'm writing."¹⁶

Thus, the relationship between Virginia Woolf's fiction and non-fiction becomes an organic and complementary objectification of her concept of androgyny. A Room of One's Own and Orlando, Three Guineas and The Years, constitute simply two examples of companion pieces which force attention away from the experimental, aesthetic, or Bloomsbury Virginia Woolf. Instead, we pursue the inevitable ambivalence created when the intuitive novelist attempts, rather unsuccessfully in the tracts, to lay bare with a logician's clarity the fact before the vision:

A novelist, of course, lives so much deeper down than a critic that his statements are apt to be contradictory and confusing; they seem to break in process of coming to the surface, and do not hold together in the light of reason.¹⁷

The androgynous quest, then, enriched Virginia Woolf's fiction with a social and psychological referent which led to a meeting place for feminism and mysticism. Intellect combined with intuition, and the mind's natural yearnings for solitude completed by companionship were complementary fusions in a lifelong search for wholeness. It is exactly this attempt to secure the best of two worlds which is, at once, the basis of total and

partial achievement in the work of a literary feminist who labours under the shadow of Sir Leslie Stephen. Virginia Woolf alternates between attempts at ratiocination prompted by a desire to prove herself the equal of the male intellect, and intuitive achievements which are the result of that "greater impersonality" in women's lives which cannot but "encourage the poetic spirit."¹⁸

Finally, it is the purpose of this investigation to test Monique Nathan's assertion that "the androgynous individual is never more than an ideal, a fiction, a myth placed among the living by the novelist, and unable to live except on paper."¹⁹ Stung by what she considered a masculine, unilateral assertion of superiority, Virginia Woolf begins her creation of character by championing the ennobling effects of female intuition, and castigating the narrowness of male intellect. The feminist shrillness mellows, however, into an androgynous statement where a perfect balance of masculine and feminine elements in the mind will see an end to discrimination and superiority. The path that Virginia Woolf traces to Bernard, the artist, who combines the sensibility of a woman with the rational judgment of a man, can best be related by exploring the victories of intuition, the failures of intellect, and the final syntheses which rest on the supporting base of symbol.

CHAPTER I

OF PATRIARCHS AND MATRIARCHS

As an essential prelude to the study of Virginia Woolf's fundamental dualism and the search for wholeness which inform her work, it is necessary to recognize briefly the formative influences of Sir Leslie Stephen and his wife, Julia. The pattern of the Stephen household has a microcosmic, representative status as symbol of the wider, Victorian patriarchal society. One critic points clearly to the contradictory legacy of an influential intellectualism and an almost reactionary imagination, inherited by Virginia Woolf from her parents, which finds echoes in the novelist's creations from Mr. Ambrose to Bart Oliver, and from Rachel Vinrace to Lucy Swithin. Hilda Ridley recalls that

in her physical beauty, temperament and imagination Virginia Woolf certainly resembled her mother, [but] such an endowment may be greatly modified by environment. Leslie Stephen, like other strong, opinionated Victorian men was a formidable piece of environment.¹

An examination of the parental relationship will lead to an understanding of the deployed battle lines of male and female, in support of Virginia Woolf's belief that truth must be apprehended not only by means of ratiocination, but also by way of intuition and sensibility.

Philosopher, essayist, biographer, and critic, Sir Leslie Stephen was an eminent literary figure, editor of the prestigious Cornhill Magazine. The family circle could lay claim to familiarity with such artistic and intellectual giants as James Russell Lowell, Thomas Hardy, Henry James,

and George Meredith. However, both father and daughter shared a common victory over extreme sensitivity through dint of rigid physical and intellectual discipline. Virginia Woolf's father provided the supporting hand behind his teenage daughter's recovery from the nervous breakdown which followed Julia Stephen's death. Thus, the novelist's adolescence was entirely overshadowed by a rigid paternal personality which championed the intellect, yet stifled its complementary, imaginative aspect. One wonders at the effects on an already emotionally unstable young girl of a father who "was ashamed of his nervous sensibility and boyish ill health", who "throughout his life ...despised weakness in any form."² The patriarch opened the doors of his library, bequeathing an intellectual capital which kept the daughter in tutelage, so that she yearned to escape from her father's study into a room of her own.

The exact nature of the patriarch's influence on Virginia Woolf emerges more clearly with an analysis of Leslie Stephen's attitudes to women and to domestic life in general. The head of the Victorian household characteristically vacillated, in his treatment of the female, between the extremes of subjugation and deification. Women's place was certainly in the home, where they established a shrine at the altar of which men worshipped, and offered the sacrificial victims - their wives:

No one, I hope, could assert more willingly than I, that the faculties of women should be cultivated as fully as possible, and that every sphere in which their faculties can be effectively applied should be thrown open to them. But the doctrine sometimes tacitly confounded with this, that the sphere generally assigned to women is necessarily lower or less important than others is not to be admitted The domestic influence is, no doubt, confined within narrower limits; but then within those limits it is incomparably stronger and more certain of effect. The man or woman can really mould the character of a little circle and determine the whole life of one little section of the next generation.³

The difficulty here apparently lies in a deeply-felt admission of the primacy of domestic life, which may itself deny women the right to personal fulfilment. It is of little significance to Stephen that domesticity condemns the female to an obscurity which denies her separate intellectual existence. Moreover, the difference between admirable sentiment and a completely unrelated practice finds further expression in Noel Annan's judgment of the working relationship of the Stephen marriage:

He ... desired to transform her [Julia] into an apotheosis of motherhood, but treated her in the home as someone who should be at his beck and call, support him in every emotional crisis, order the minutiae of his life and then submit to his criticism in those household matters of which she was mistress He was forever trampling upon her feelings, wounding the person who comforted him, half conscious of his hebetude, unable to restrain it.⁴

"That man is unfortunate," Leslie Stephen believed, "who has not a saint of his own."⁵ The argument is carried to its logical conclusion when the species of moral dogmatism here espoused comes into paradoxical conflict with Stephen's theological scepticism. The savage, self-pitying, emotional blackmail he inflicted on his daughters is the natural outcome of the patriarch's projection of a holy image of womanhood which curiously compounds her as servant and saint.

The goad of sexual discrimination which formed the genesis of the proposed "Outsider's Society" in Three Guineas sees Virginia Woolf propose the moral superiority of women over men, because women "have been preserved by countless humiliations from the great modern sins of vanity, egotism and megalomania - that is to say ridicule, censure and contempt."⁶ On the other hand, the Victorian patriarch voices the masculine myth of dependence on the female. Or as Annan notes:

Like other Victorian moralists [Stephen] sees loose-living and lust as the hooks which clutch at man and make him lower than the angels. Man can be

saved from himself by women : feminine innocence will rouse man from sensuality Because the institutions of marriage and the family will perish, and society with them, unless we eradicate 'brutalizing and antisocial instincts' all social forces must be directed to the inculcation of chastity.⁷

These diametrically opposed views are best reconciled by tracing the argument in Quentin Bell's excellent analysis of the Bloomsbury ethic. When Leslie Stephen remarks of his younger brother, Fitzjames, that he "could only make a real friend of a man in whom he could recognize the capacity of masculine emotions,"⁸ there is a clear conclusion to be drawn. By quoting his younger brother, Leslie Stephen simply indicates his own prizing of masculine values, and his hatred of effeminacy. Moreover, Bell sees the radical rejection of sexual taboos as imparting a distinctly feminist aura to the circle surrounding Virginia and Vanessa Stephen:

... but whereas nineteenth century feminism was puritanical and hoped to see male licence curbed by the natural guardians of the home, the feminism of Bloomsbury was libertarian, and, while challenging the ethics of a society which saw in the man the natural fount of power and authority challenged also the entire system of morality on which that power was based. For members of the group, the sanctity of the home had no justification save in mutual affection.⁹

Beyond the tragic circumstances surrounding Julia Stephen's death, there is, unfortunately, little mention of her mother in Virginia Woolf's personal memoirs. The former Julia Duckworth is, however, remembered for two things - her outstanding beauty, and her ability to shield the Stephen children from the more frightening intimidations of her husband. This is not to suggest that the Stephen marriage lacked love, or even accommodation of husband to wife. Indeed, Keith May's final judgment will lead us to cite those other critics who feel constrained to comment on the fundamental dualism in Virginia Woolf's work:

... Virginia Woolf had to express the multiform 'feminine' experience with words, those instruments of 'masculine' order. She represented with the tools of her father the vision of her mother, thus enriching both the talents of her inheritance.¹⁰

For Daiches, then, the values of Leslie Stephen reside in the intellectual snobbery of London, whereas Julia Stephen's milieu is the seashore at Cornwall. He concludes that

this antithesis between the city and the shore, between London and Cornwall, is almost symbolic of the nature of her sensibility, which contemplates the solid facts of life with the meditative eye that has learned its introspective and dissolving wisdom from watching sunsets over deserted seas.¹¹

While Guiget, in summing up her artistic process, asserts

the combination of a spontaneity which seems entirely derived from feeling, and a lucid determination which seems dominated by pure intelligence In reality, the fusion of the two antagonistic elements is achieved below the level of consciousness; it is in the depths of the mind that, inextricably intermingled, they proceed together to assimilate experience and to elaborate what is, for Virginia Woolf, an individual substance - thought. In a word, it might be said that her intelligence informs her sensibility and that her sensibility embodies her intelligence.¹²

As Joan Bennett even more succinctly observes, the Woolfian novel brings "something much more interesting and profound than an advocacy of equal rights," for her significant contribution is to unveil "the essential quality of female experience where it differs from the male."¹³ Such a connection, however, rests upon "a peculiar conflict or tension of the mind, as of one poised between two opposed beliefs."¹⁴ Victoria Sackville-West, in a panegyric on her friend, associates Virginia Woolf with the androgynous Coleridge: "She and Coleridge seem to me to combine the unusually mixed ingredients of genius and intellect, the wild fantastic intuitive genius on the one hand, and the cold, reasoning intellect on the other."¹⁵ Bernard Blackstone finds "the antithesis of reason and intuition"¹⁶ the informing base of her work, while James Hafley's classical analysis of her novels keeps coming back to the same dichotomy.¹⁷ Winifred Holtby

unearths "two streams of thought - one practical, controversial, analytical; the other creative, poetical, audacious."¹⁸ Ralph Freedman notes "an almost classical dualism, extending from the relationship of mind and body to the philosophically distinct relations between self-consciousness and its world."¹⁹ To Virginia Woolf's biographer, Aileen Pippett, her subject appears as "a woman divided against herself, desiring but never achieving an unattainable unity."²⁰ Similar viewpoints are presented in two additional summaries of her work. Edwin Berry Burgum observes that "the recurrent theme of her fiction ... is the loss in the modern world of the Renaissance ideal of the well rounded man, what our psychology terms the man of well-integrated personality."²¹ Finally, Herbert Marder maintains that "Virginia Woolf saw the universe as the scene of an eternal conflict between opposites, corresponding, roughly speaking, to masculine and feminine principles."²² In essence, then, we should begin with an analysis of representative patriarchs and matriarchs, thereby laying bare the dichotomy of intuition and intellect.

One of Virginia Woolf's earliest attacks on the rational patriarchy occurs in The Voyage Out. Rachel Vinrace's reaction to the twin photographs of the illegitimate Evelyn's parents is symbolically informative:

Mrs. Murgatroyd looked indeed as if the life had been crushed out of her; she knelt on a chair gazing piteously from behind the body of a Pomeranian dog The second photograph represented a handsome soldier with high regular features and a heavy black moustache; his hand rested on the hilt of his sword.²³

Evelyn's frustrated attempts to order her own existence suggest the feminist double standard which haunted Virginia Woolf:

She would like women to be able to hide behind chaste, anonymous skirts when they need to withdraw from a milieu suddenly too 'male' - whether in literature or real life - and yet she would like them to be able, as writers, to indulge in Faustian experience for the sake of a full expression of their art.²⁴

Again, we could cite the Ambrose marriage, a presumably happy union of feminine self-effacement and dominant masculinity. Yet Virginia Woolf's mouthpiece, Terence Hewet, has this comment:

She [Mrs. Ambrose] gave way to him; she spoilt him; she arranged things for him; she who was all truth to others was not true to her husband, was not true to her friends if they came in conflict with her husband. It was a strange and piteous flaw in her nature. (245)

A similar opposition between the male-dominated professional sphere and the domestic chrysalis emerges, in Night and Day, between the young solicitor Ralph Denham and his elder sister:

Her face was round but worn, and expressed that tolerant, but anxious good humour which is the special attribute of elder sisters in large families ... whereas he seemed to look straightly and keenly at one object, she appeared to be in the habit of considering everything from many points of view. (25-26)

The prototypes are well established in these earlier novels.

Again, in Night and Day, we could contrast Mrs. Hilbery's intuitional expertise with her undeveloped mind. She "had a way of seeming the wisest person in the room. But on the whole she found it very necessary to seek support in her daughter" (39-40). Katharine attempts escape from ritualistic tea-pouring into the solid world of mathematics. In The Voyage Out, the bond is created between Helen Ambrose and Hirst because "he took her outside this little world of love and emotion. He had a grasp of facts" (309). At the other extreme, Mr. Ambrose edits Pindar, while Mr. Hilbery is totally engrossed in a semantic study of Shelley. Through the similar portraits of Professors Huxtable, Sopwith, and Cowan, in Jacob's Room, Virginia Woolf can be seen to be abandoning character in preparation for her supreme caricature of dry intellection in Mrs. Dalloway.

Sir William Bradshaw, the fashionable and successful Harley Street

psychiatrist, is hardly equipped to deal with the real ills that beset mankind. Worshipping at the shrines of neatness, proportion, and order he has sacrificed humanity to convention:

Worshipping proportion, Sir William not only prospered himself but made England prosper, secluded her lunatics, forbade childbirth, penalized despair, made it impossible for the unfit to propagate their views until they, too, shared his sense of proportion - his, if they were men, Lady Bradshaw's if they were women. (110)

Moreover, the fate of Mrs. Ambrose and Mrs. Hilbery is echoed in the following description of his wife, based on a photograph of Lady Bradshaw in court regalia which hangs in his office. "Fifteen years ago she had gone under. It was nothing you could put your finger on; there had been no scene, no snap; only the slow sinking, water-logged, of her will into his. Sweet was her smile, swift her submission" (111).

The polemic, Three Guineas, provides the clue to the almost Satanic Bradshaw. Virginia Woolf believed that professional life resulted in the destruction of the man and his replacement by the monster:

... if people are highly successful in their professions they lose their senses They have no time for conversation. They lose their sense of proportion in the relations between one thing and another. Humanity goes What then remains of a human being who has lost sight, and sound and a sense of proportion? Only a cripple in a cave.²⁵

Here, essentially, is where the psychiatrist fails Septimus. Instead of enabling the shell-shocked, potential suicide to re-establish vital connections with the world, Bradshaw would isolate his patient in an asylum, there to be converted to the Bradshaw doctrine.

Virginia Woolf's imagery functionally sets Bradshaw in an aura of unfeeling. Grey is his colour, the colour of his car, his hair, his wife's furs, his rugs, his room - the colour of insensitivity to human suffering. As an expression of completely unrestrained masculinity, Bradshaw's patriarchal tyranny forces his acceptance as a symbol of almost unmitigated

evil, which calls into question the quieter intuitive victories of

Mrs. Dalloway:

... he had to support him police and the good of society, which, he remarked very quietly, would take care, down in Surrey, that these unsocial impulses ... were held in control Naked, defenceless, the exhausted, the friendless received the impress of Sir William's will. He swooped; he devoured. He shut people up. (113)

Thus, while she deplores Bradshaw's destruction of freedom by enforced obedience to the will of an artificial society and questions his dogmatic judgments of the difference between sanity and insanity, Virginia Woolf is herself guilty of an equivalent dilution of feeling. There is more of the element of caricature in this portrait of the patriarch as villain than one usually finds in the novels. Moreover, the disciplined, aesthetic use of language is usurped by a rhetoric which is erosive of the novel's claims to serious consideration. "... quick to minister to the craving which lit her husband's eye so oilily for dominion, for power, she cramped, squeezed, pared, pruned" (111-112). Essentially, then, this sensationalist melodrama serves a more social than fictional purpose, more in keeping with the vitriolic parody of Three Guineas or the instructive fantasy of Orlando.

Mr. Ramsay, on the other hand, as the fictional representation of Leslie Stephen and because of the complex of emotions his memory aroused in Virginia Woolf, escapes the element of caricature which marred the portrait of the patriarchal villain, Sir William Bradshaw. Her ambivalent attitude finds expression in a Diary entry of November 28, 1928:

Father's birthday. He would have been 96, 96, yes, today and could have been 96, like other people one has known: but mercifully was not. His life would have entirely ended mine. What would have happened? No writing, no books; - inconceivable I must read him some day. I wonder if I can feel again, I hear his voice, I know this by heart. (138)

She goes on to admit: "I used to think of him and mother daily: but writing the Lighthouse laid them in my mind" (138).

Here again the recurring theme of Virginia Woolf's writing as a form of fictional therapy asserts itself. Attracted by Mr. Ramsay's uncompromising honesty and unflinching courage as he attempts to order the surrounding chaos intellectually, she yet depreciates the inherent incapacity of the intellect alone to grasp the whole, the perennial mystery of reality. As Jean Guiget rightly concludes: "Mr. Ramsay is the father figure which had to be exorcised; it was his despotism in all its forms over mind and heart, that had to be overthrown."²⁶

Like Ridley Ambrose, Mr. Ramsay is a domestic tyrant in his absolute veneration of facts. He is described as "the greatest metaphysician of his time", and his mind is likened, in a Bergsonian metaphor, to the keyboard of a piano:

It was a splendid mind. For if thought is like the keyboard of a piano, divided into so many notes, or like the alphabet is ranged in twenty six letters all in order, then his splendid mind had no sort of difficulty in running over those letters one by one, firmly and accurately, until it had reached, say the letter Q. (39-40)

Still, casting himself in the role of the leader of an exploration which is attempting to traverse the icy wastes, Mr. Ramsay "would not die lying down; he would find some crag of rock, and there, his eyes fixed on the storm, trying to the end to pierce the darkness, he would die standing. He would never reach R" (41). This admirable courage exhibited at the dark frontiers of human ignorance draws approbation from Virginia Woolf, but it denies the existence of another, more important, world of feeling. The imbalance, which Mr. Ramsay personifies, provides the basis on which to distinguish the paternal from the patriarchal. That Mr. Ramsay's commitment to meteorological fact should take precedence over a concern for his son's feelings outrages Mrs. Ramsay. Undoubtedly rain will prevent the proposed excursion to the lighthouse, but the effect of James's

disappointment is of minimal importance to her husband. The patriarch is concerned only with the "extraordinary irrationality ... of women's minds," whereas "to pursue truth with such astonishing lack of consideration for other people's feelings, to rend the thin veils of civilization so wantonly, so brutally, was to [Mrs. Ramsay] an outrage of human decency" (37-38). We will find that only the symbolic voyage to the lighthouse will allay the hurt that James carries with him over the years.

In The Years, Edward Pargiter's solitary intellectual life is similarly stultifying, in spite of his mastery over "the past and poetry" (328). The classical scholar is completely at home "lecturing troops of devout schoolmistresses on the Acropolis" (161), yet North reflects that there is "something sealed up, stated about him" (327). His intellectual immersion has made it impossible for him to share, to attain selflessness. "Why can't he flow?" North asks himself. "Why can't he pull the string of the shower bath? Why's it all locked up, refrigerated? Because he's a priest, a mystery monger, he thought; feeling his coldness; this guardian of beautiful words" (328). Or again, we could cast our attention back to Hirst, in The Voyage Out, whose inability to care for the feelings of Rachel renders him brusque and hurtful. He feels that her classical education, sadly neglected, could begin with a reading of Gibbon:

'I shall send you my copy. What I want to know is - ' he looked at her critically, 'You see, the problem is, can one really talk to you? Have you got a mind, or are you like the rest of your sex? You seem to me absurdly young compared with men of your age' (152).

This arrogant masculine taunt, coming from "one of the three" (150) most distinguished men in England, is insufferable to the intelligent daughter of Leslie Stephen.

Mr. Ramsay sees his wife merely as a vehicle for propitiation,

since she is constantly on call to soothe his sensitive vanity, to play havoc with her own scheme of values. Inevitably he turns to her for sustenance, as "into this delicious fecundity, this fountain and spray of life, the fatal sterility of the male plunged itself, like a beak of brass, barren and bare" (44). Selfishness and egotism are here given concrete expression in "the beak of brass" and "arid scimitar". Earlier, in *Mrs. Dalloway*, Virginia Woolf had used similar images to render, through his symbolic actions with a horn-handled knife, Peter Walsh's "silly unconventionality; his weakness, his lack of the ghost of a notion what anyone else was feeling" (52). His every variation of grip and movement with the knife is made to stand for the particular thought, feeling, or attitude of the moment. The knife is a source of reassurance for him as he fingers it to follow an attractive young woman, or as he opens the big blade, in preparation for facing the Bradshaws of London society at Clarissa's party. He holds the knife at arm's length, shuts the blade, then peevishly, with a typical male arrogance, replaces the knife in his pocket as he thinks of Clarissa, "cold as an icicle", and of those females who "do not know what passion is" (89-90). The warmth, beauty, and intuitional strength of Mrs. Ramsay is placed here in a quite favourable perspective.

Mr. Ramsay also has the unfortunate habit, shared by Sir Leslie Stephen, of uncontrolled mutterings, when the latter would "burst out, half to himself, half to the powers above, but quite audibly"²⁷ if an unwelcome visitor looked like extending a tea engagement to include dinner as well. August Carmichael, for merely requesting another plate of soup, is greeted by a scowling, frowning, flushing host. Mrs. Ramsay observes her husband's "anger fly like a pack of hounds into his eyes, his

brow, and she knew that in a moment something violent would explode" (11). Later, James and Cam face the prospect of a horrible embarrassment as their father mutters imprecations against Macalister's boy for not keeping the boat going at a flying rate. It would seem that philosophy and the austere analysis of objective reality are incompatible with charity and tolerance, since Virginia Woolf believed that scientific truth must be balanced by intuitional insights.

Ultimately, Mr. Ramsay's credibility, as well as the extent of Virginia Woolf's blending of sympathy and castigation, can best be expressed by exposing the ambivalence in two comments external to To the Lighthouse. In her essay on her father, in The Captain's Death Bed, she admits his subjection to unreasonable moods, yet maintains that they were largely superficial and quickly passed. She states that "it was his power of feeling strongly and of expressing his feeling with vigour that made him sometimes so alarming as a companion."²⁸ As a balance to this subdued, filial assessment of tyranny we could turn to the symbol of intellect described in Orlando:

... the intellect divine as it is, and all-worshipful, has a habit of lodging in the most seedy of carcasses, and after, alas, acts the cannibal among the other faculties so that often where the Mind is biggest, the Heart, the Senses, Magnanimity, Charity, Tolerance, Kindliness, and the rest of them scarcely have room to breathe. (150)

This is the very point which will be made in the analysis of the lighthouse and Lily Briscoe's painting as symbolic equivalents of androgyny. Masculine intellect must be balanced by feminine intuition, and Mr. Ramsay's contribution to a vision of fusion is therefore viable. Such is also the conclusion of Guiget:

... if Leslie Stephen could represent that rational quest for truth and that feeling of solitude which the author sought to express, only Julia Stephen could represent that unfailing intuition, that sensibility, that gift of sympathy, which, for Virginia Woolf, are the supreme human qualities, those which give a person that intensely radiant power, illuminating the darkness like a lighthouse beam.²⁹

It is within the context of the party that we can most fruitfully examine the counterbalancing, intuitive achievements of the matriarch. Virginia Woolf was inevitably drawn to the conventional opulence of the party, concert, and dance, the essential components of the London season. Leonard Woolf, in fact, has usefully isolated the status of the dinner-party as a focus of symbol and meaning through all of his wife's novels:

The psychology of the hostess may contain all or any of the following ingredients: enjoyment of her guests; a kind of artistic creativeness - the art of hostessship; the love of the exercise of power and prestige; the passion for the collection of anything from stamps to human beings.³⁰

In Orlando, Virginia Woolf herself records that the hostess "is our modern Sybil. She is a witch who lays her guests under a spell. In this house they think themselves happy; in that witty; in a third profound" (140). Germane to the present investigation is Leonard Woolf's account of his wife's reaction to one particular fancy-dress party, which clearly defines the implications of "the party consciousness":

... the blood, not the sticky whitish fluid of daytime, but brilliant and prickly like champagne. This was my state and most people's. We collided, when we met; went pop, used Christian names, flattered, praised and thought (or I did) of Shakespeare. At any rate I thought of him when the singing was doing. Shakespeare I thought would have liked us tonight³¹

As Virginia Woolf glories in a state of heightened awareness and connection, it is far from fortuitous that she should call to mind, Shakespeare, the androgynous symbol. "In fact," she states in A Room of One's Own, "one goes back to Shakespeare's mind as the type of the androgynous, of the man-womanly mind..." (97). Earlier in the same argument she had favourably compared Shakespeare's mind with the minds of Donne, Ben Jonson and Milton. What separates Shakespeare from this company is that "his poetry flows from him free and unimpeded", because "his grudges and spites and antipathies are hidden from us" (58).

The integrating, intuitive female, as she presides over the ubiquitous dinner-party, goes even one step further. Her attention is directed completely to the task of synthesis, as she forces her guests to discard all personal inhibitions and prejudices. Even the intellectually deprived Mrs. Dalloway has the gift of "knowing people almost by instinct" (11). In both The Voyage Out and the series of short stories which predated Mrs. Dalloway ("The New Dress", "Together and Apart", "A Summing Up". and "The Man Who Loved His Kind") the basis is laid for Clarissa's retort to Peter Walsh and Richard, who deplore her party-giving on grounds of medical hazard and snobbery:

And both were quite wrong. What she liked was simply life.

'That's what I do it for,' she said, speaking aloud, to life

But to go deeper, beneath what people said ... in her own mind now, what did it mean to her, this thing called life; Oh, it was very queer. Here was So-and-so in South Kensington; someone up in Bayswater; and somebody else, say, in Mayfair. And she felt quite continuously a sense of their existence; and she felt what a waste; and she felt what a pity; and she felt if only they could be brought together; so she did it. And it was an offering; to combine, to create; but to whom?

An offering for the sake of offering, perhaps. Anyhow it was her gift. (134-135)

As Frank Baldanza notes: "The focus of reality as the Dalloways represent it is the party."³² The idea of heightened awareness is made concrete by a remark of the fashion-haunted Mabel Waring in "The New Dress", when she asserts that "a party makes things either much more real or much less real."³³ Mabel, like her author, portrays a state of mind poised precariously between ecstatic happiness and the depths of despair. The polarities correspond to her initial pride of ownership in her new yellow dress which pales into painful embarrassment as the dress assumes an unfashionable dowdiness at the party. This negative note is balanced, in "Together and Apart", when the absorption in self of Ruth Anning and Roderick Searle is obliterated by a vision of fusion, directly attributable

to the potency of the social nexus:

... now quite suddenly, like a white bolt in a mist ... there it happened, the old ecstasy of life; its invisible assault; for it was unpleasant at the same time that it rejoiced and rejuvenated and filled the veins and nerves with threads of ice and fire; it was terrifying. 'Canterbury twenty years ago,' said Mrs. Anning, as one lays a shade over an intense light; or covers some burning peach with a green leaf, for it is too strong, too ripe, too full.³⁴

In the same way, Sasha Latham, in "A Summing Up", attests to the potency of the party in cementing personal relations by her juxtaposed images of the civilized achievement within the Dalloway walls and the brutish impersonality beyond the party's sphere of influence: "... she looked at the house veneratingly, enthusiastically, as if a golden shaft ran through her and tears formed on it and fell in profound thanksgiving."³⁵ Indeed, the suggestion of fusion is replete with overtones of an inverted androgyny in the contrasting image: "At the moment [going back in] in some back street or public house, the usual terrible sexless, inarticulate voice rang out, a shriek, a cry."³⁶

In the Diary Virginia Woolf complains of an occasional inability to respond to the party as wholeheartedly as the integrating female should:

And I do not love my kind. I detest them. I pass them by. I let them break on me like dirty rain drops. No longer can I summon up that energy which when it seems one of these dry little shapes floating past, or rather stuck on the rock sweeps around them, steepes them, infuses them, nerves them and so finally fills them and creates them. Once I had a gift for doing this, and a passion and it made parties arduous and exciting. (79)

In reconciling such an admission of inadequacy with the ecstatic state described above, we must look to a possible epicene base to Virginia Woolf's personality. She is both Prickett Ellis and Mrs. O'Keefe, since "The Man Who Loved His Kind" is not indiscriminately castigated for his misanthropy and masculine inadequacy. His generosity to the poor family that he has legally represented at least partially resurrects him

from identification with Sir William Bradshaw or Charles Tansley. The dichotomy between Clarissa and Septimus is quite overtly suggested as the man and woman prepare to leave:

"I am afraid I am one of those very ordinary people," he said, getting up, "who love their kind." Upon which Mrs. O'Keefe almost shouted: "So do I." Hating each other, hating the whole houseful of people who had given them this painful, this disillusioning evening, these two lovers of their kind got up and without a word parted forever.³⁷

The distinguishing feature between the short stories and Mrs. Dalloway is that the novel presents the Clarissa-Septimus ambivalence through verbal motifs, narrative links, and cinematic montage, so that the reader is continually prepared for Mrs. Dalloway's ultimate visionary moment at the party. Clarissa and Septimus, as the novelist says, are "one and the same person", but "their reality consists not of themselves as persons, but of their relationship to each other as forms."³⁸

On the first level there is the careful Proustian interweaving into the text of the line in the dirge from Cymbeline, "Fear no more the heat o' the sun", which passes into Septimus's consciousness as "Fear no more, says the heart in the body; fear no more" (154), and "The sun hot" (165), just before he commits suicide. The same line wells up at Clarissa's party when Septimus's death is announced, but this time in association with the memory of the shilling she had flung into the Serpentine. Indeed, Clarissa's fourfold repetition of the line would suggest a defence mechanism which her instinctive optimism provides as a barrier to the darker side of experience. In what is indeed a useful simplification, Baldanza goes on to note: "Thus Mrs. Woolf presents the two poles of existence as she sees it; Clarissa and Septimus, parties and suicides, communication and death."³⁹ As we shall see, such judgments serve as a useful prerequisite to the completion of Bernard's androgyny in

the last section of this argument. Moreover, Clarissa's appreciation of the need for defiance in the face of the ultimate enemy, death, closely prefigures Bernard's final soliloquy:

A thing there was that mattered; a thing wreathed about with chatter, defaced, obscured in her own life, let drop every day in corruption, lies, chatter. This he had preserved. Death was defiance. Death was an attempt to communicate, people feeling the impossibility of reaching the centre which, mystically, evaded them; closeness drew apart; rapture faded; one was alone. There was an embrace in death. (204)

One representative critical opinion sees To the Lighthouse as a study of the feminine creative principle which, in the midst of the flux, the unceasing movement of life, unifies and sustains human personality, despite the blind fecundity of nature on the one hand and the masculine analytical intellect on the other.⁴⁰

More specifically, Mrs. Ramsay's dinner party so partakes of the real and the symbolic as to give almost ultimate expression to Virginia Woolf's belief in the essential creativity and artistry of the intuitional female. We recall Katharine Hilbery's domestic achievement in Night and Day which had established "an orderly place, shapely, controlled - a place where life had been trained to show to the best advantage, and, though composed of different elements, made to appear harmonious and with a character of its own" (40). Mrs. Ramsay's apotheosis is ensured, for in her capacity as hostess she unifies the dissonant elements of the dinner party, so that "they were all conscious of making a party together ... had their common cause against that fluidity out there" (41). Virginia Woolf objectifies the female achievement in A Room of One's Own, when she states that men receive from women

some stimulus, some renewal of creative power which is in the gift only of the opposite sex to bestow. [The husband] would open the drawing room or nursery ... and find [his wife] among her children perhaps, or with a piece of embroidery on her knee - at any rate, the centre of some different medium from his own would so quicken his creative power that insensibly his sterile mind would begin to plot again. (86)

Mrs. Ramsay, then, lives only to pacify and soothe the intellectual male ego - the Ramsays and Tansleys of society.

At the outset, the solitary male ego promotes in Mrs. Ramsay a feeling of frustration. Mr. Ramsay, Charles Tansley, and William Bankes exhibit irritation, resentment, and apathy:

Nothing seemed to have merged. They all sat separate. And the whole of the effort of merging and flowing and creating rested on her. Again she felt as a fact without hostility, the sterility of men, for if she did not do it nobody would do it (96)

Mrs. Ramsay's first achievement is to calm the simmering opposition between Charles and Lily. Tansley's feeling of social inferiority gains expression in a belligerent taunt: "Women can't write; women can't paint" (99). Indeed, Lily, at this stage, is a diffident example of the feminine creative principle who baulks at her appointed task:

... to go to the help of the young man opposite so that he may ... relieve ... his urgent desire to assert himself; as indeed it is their duty, she reflected ... to help us, suppose the Tube were to burst into flames But how would it be, she thought, if neither of us did either of these things? (105)

Mrs. Ramsay's eyes convey the necessary admonition: "Unless you apply some balm to the anguish of this hour and say something nice to that young man there, life will run upon the rocks" (106).

Lily then capitulates and institutes a trite and acceptable conversation with her foeman, Tansley:

She had done the usual trick - been nice. She would never know him. He would never know her. Human relations were all like that, she thought, and the worst ... were between men and women. Inevitably these were extremely insincere. (107)

As we shall see, Lily is not convinced, feeling only a sense of having been prevailed upon - that is until she achieves the rapprochement demanded in her painting and feels a potent need for both Ramsays, a state symbolised in her final brush stroke. For the moment she simply underlines the

intuitional victory which she later voices:

But what a power was in the human soul! she thought. That woman ... resolved everything into simplicity; made these angers, irritations fall off like old rags; she ... made out of that miserable silliness and spite (she and Charles squabbling, sparring, had been silly and spiteful) something ... which survived, after all these years, complete ... and ... stayed in the mind affecting one almost like a work of art. (182-183)

An even more specific importance is attached to this dinner party. For Mrs. Ramsay, the inveterate matchmaker, it assumes the dual status of wedding breakfast and communion meal:

Mrs. Ramsay ... had been uneasy, waiting for Paul and Minta to come in, and unable, she felt, to settle to things They must come now, Mrs. Ramsay thought, looking at the door, and at that instant, Minta Doyle, Paul Rayley, and a maid carrying a great dish in her hands came in together. (112-113)

The high priestess of domesticity obviously intended the culinary achievement of the Boeuf en Daube to reinforce her almost sacramental achievement in the engagement of Paul and Minta. Creations, on the levels both of a ritualistic meal and an equally ritualistic social union, are simply twin expressions of Mrs. Ramsay's art. Conflicting elements begin to be assuaged as the masterpiece of the main dish creates an awed respect in William Bankes for Mrs. Ramsay's achievements as hostess. Moreover, Minta allays Mr. Ramsay's truculence by girlishly arousing his chivalry, so that he good-naturedly upbraids her for scrambling around the rocks in her best jewels. Thus Mrs. Ramsay's threefold achievement, in the dinner party, the Boeuf en Daube, and the engagement moves to its inevitable climax:

And she peered into the dish, with its shiny walls and its confusion of savoury brown and yellow meats and its bay leaves and its wine, and thought, This will celebrate the occasion - a curious sense rising in her, at once freakish and tender, of celebrating a festival, as if two emotions were called up in her, one profound - for what could be more serious than the love of man for woman, what more commanding, more impressive, bearing in its bosom the seeds of death; at the same time these lovers, these people entering into illusion glittering eyed, must be danced around with mockery, decorated with garlands.

'It is a triumph,' said Mr. Bankes, laying his knife down for a moment. (115-116)

The imagery in this record of achievement distinctly suggests a religious festival, with Paul and Minta the sacrificial offerings of the presiding priestess, Mrs. Ramsay. Indeed, Lily feels of her hostess that "There was something frightening about her. She was irresistible. Always she got her own way in the end ... having brought it all about, somehow laughed, led her victims, Lily felt, to the altar" (116-117).

In her combination of the civilized awareness of Mrs. Dalloway and the primal life rhythms of Susan, Mrs. Ramsay is Virginia Woolf's supreme intuitive creation. Her personality merges the extremes of glittering social achievement, with its purely surface accomplishment, and the deeper, elemental core of maternal being. Thus her mimetic adequacy is ensured at the same time as she assumes archetypal status. The other guests are as aware of her separate reality as an ideal matriarch as she is aware of the mythical, indestructible nature of her achievement. As she helps William Bankes to another portion of beef she looks "into the depth of the earthenware pot" and glows with the pride of achievement. She observes the almost occult harmony she has created

like a fume rising upwards, holding them safe together. Nothing need be said; nothing could be said. There it was all around them. It partook, she felt, carefully helping Mr. Bankes to a specially tender piece, of eternity. (121)

Mrs. Ramsay's unfailing intuition, sensibility, and gift of sympathy have illuminated the shades which cast a gloom over the beginning of the meal. Mrs. Ramsay has spent her own self in this achievement, but the reward is commensurate with the effort:

They would ... however long they lived, come back to this night ... and to her too. It flattered her, where she was most susceptible of flattery, to

think how, wound about in their hearts, however long they lived she would be woven. (130)

By way of summary, the character groupings and resultant conflicts which form the base plan of Between the Acts are again presented in distinctly sexual divisions. The central contrast is the pairing of Giles Oliver and his wife, Isa. Bart Oliver and Lucy Swithin present a valuable reinforcement of the core polarity. Finally, William Dodge and Mrs. Manresa comment functionally on the divisions explored in the Giles-Isa and Bart-Lucy engagements.

Bart Oliver's emphasis on intellect leads him into the same realms of gloom that Mr. Ramsay had so courageously faced. "He would carry his torch of reason till it went out in the darkness of the cave", while his sister "every morning, kneeling," would protect her vision. "Every night she opened the window and looked at leaves against the sky. Then slept. Then the random ribbon of birds' voices woke her."⁴¹ In his frightening intrusion on the innocent world of childhood, old Mr. Oliver recalls Mr. Ramsay's contempt for the feelings and happiness of others:

The little boy [George] had lagged and was grouting in the grass The flower blazed between the angles of the roots. Membrane after membrane was torn. It blazed a soft yellow, a lambent light under a film of velvet; it filled the caverns behind the eyes with light. All that inner darkness became a hall, leaf smelling, earth smelling of yellow light. And the tree was beyond the flower; the grass, the flower and the tree were entire. Down on his knees grubbing he held the flower complete. Then there was a roar and a hot breath and a stream of coarse grey hair rushed between him and the flower. Up he leapt, toppling in his fright, and saw coming towards him a terrible peaked eyeless monster, moving on legs, brandishing arms. (10)

Later, compounding his terrorism with a distinctly patriarchal brand of infantilism, he taunts Isa with the accusation that her little boy was a "cry baby", a coward. Unfortunately, Isa "loathed the domestic, the possessive; the maternal. And Bart knew it and did it on purpose to tease

her, the old brute, her father-in-law" (15). Similarly, Lucy recalls the ghoulish pleasure he took in forcing her, as a child, to unhook a fish she had caught. His pleasure was centred on the horror she felt as the gills filled with blood, a nightmare memory that she has carried with her over the years. Engrossed in The Times, rather than books, "the treasured life blood of immortal spirits" (75), Bart becomes easy game for Mrs. Manresa. "A thorough good sort she was. She made old Bart feel young" (30). The indiscriminating intellect is once again putty in the hands of the quintessential female.

That **sanctimonious** predator, Miss Kilman, had provided a perfect vehicle for Virginia Woolf's aggressive atheism. It is small wonder, then, that the reader is somewhat amazed at the sympathetic portrait of Lucy Swithin with the "cross gleaming gold on her breast" (9). The typical earlier response had been an outright condemnation of the type that Rachel voices in The Voyage Out, when she observes a hospital nurse praying in the hotel chapel:

The face of this single worshipper became printed on [her] mind with an impression of keen horror, and she had it suddenly revealed to her what Helen meant and St. John meant when they proclaimed their hatred of Christianity. With the violence that now marked her feelings, she rejected all that she had implicitly believed. (232)

Now, in Virginia Woolf's final novel, even Lucy's patriarchal brother can view belief in God with an air of tolerant detachment. Bart ponders why in Lucy's skull, shaped so much like his own, there existed a pray-able being? She didn't, he supposed, invest it with hair, teeth or toe nails. It was, he supposed, more of a force or a radiance controlling the thrush and the worm; the tulip and the hound; and himself, too, an old man with swollen veins. It got her out of her bed on a cold morning and sent her down the muddy path to worship it. (19)

The change in emphasis resides only partly in the opposition of Lucy's intuitional faith and Bart's commonsense rationality. It must

also be seen in the context of Virginia Woolf's increasing interest in religion and mysticism. Her Diary records an expanding association with theological materials, for while writing The Years she notes that she had

read St. Paul and the papers. I must buy the Old Testament. I am reading the Acts of the Apostles. At last I am illuminating that dark spot in my reading. What happened in Rome? And there are seven volumes of Renan. (236)

Further, there is the enigmatic reference to her "spiritual conversion" (151), which follows an earlier plan for a theological dissertation:

"I was then writing a long picturesque essay upon the Christian religion, I think; called Religio Laici, I believe, proving that man has need of a God" (151). Her researches associated with Three Guineas resulted in quotations from St. Paul and Christ, and a continuing attempt to absorb Pascal. Her efforts here are at first unrewarding. "I try to concentrate on Pascal. I can't. Still it's the only way of tuning up, and I get a calm, if not understanding. These pin points of theology need a grasp beyond me" (314).

Although Lucy's vision is ephemeral, her possession of a simple and honest religious faith, as opposed to Doris Kilman's theological perversion, is an essential element in "the clear-sighted, and yet essentially non-corrosive irony"⁴² which A.D. Moody sees as the informing mode of Between the Acts. Old Mrs. Swithin's love for the children is a simple, outgoing affection which is contrasted with Isa's complaint of the marriage state, where her maternal affections are muddled by "the other love, for her husband the stockbroker - 'the father of my children' ... slipping into the cliché conveniently provided by fiction" (12). Lucy's living and abiding faith is instrumental in releasing William Dodge from self-absorbing inhibitions:

... he wished to kneel before her, to kiss her hand, and to say: "At school they held me under a bucket of dirty water, Mrs. Swithin; when I looked up the world was dirty, Mrs. Swithin; so I married; but my child's not my child, Mrs. Swithin. I'm a half-man, Mrs. Swithin; a flickering, mind-divided little snake in the grass, Mrs. Swithin; as Giles saw; but you've healed me" (49)

Significantly, even the wild child of nature, the over-sexed, over-dressed, Mrs. Manresa, is chastened into submission when confronted with Lucy Swithin's refined gentility:

Mrs. Manresa laughed. She remembered. An anecdote was on the tip of her tongue, about a public lavatory built to celebrate the same occasion, and how the Mayor Could she tell it? No. The old lady, gazing at swallows, looked too refined. (67)

Outside the married state, then, the confrontation of intellectual male and intuitional female is peculiarly sterile. Brother and sister simply survive in a colourless acceptance of each other. "Nothing changed their affection; no argument; no fact; no truth. What she saw, he didn't; what he saw, she didn't - and so on ad infinitum" (19).

However, as James Hafley concludes, Lucy's readings in prehistory, her ability to break the bounds of the moment by flights into the past or future, render her as pure "spirit" since she is aware of "the real."⁴³

Mrs. Swithin caressed her cross. She gazed vaguely at the view. She was off, they guessed, on a circular tour of the imagination - one-making. Sheep, cows, grass, trees, ourselves - all are one. If discordant, producing harmony - if not to us, to a gigantic ear attached to a gigantic head. And this - she was smiling benignly - the agony of the particular sheep, cow, or human being is necessary; and so - she was beaming seraphically at the gilt vane in the distance - we reach the conclusion that all is harmony, could we hear it. And we shall. Her eyes now rested on the white summit of a cloud. Well, if the thought gave her comfort, William and Isa smiled across her, let her think it. (112)

The dichotomy which Bart and Lucy represent in such elemental terms is seen to smack of oversimplification when the complicity of both flesh and mind gains more complex analysis in the portraits of Isa and Giles. The emphasis is placed quite specifically on the failure of husband and wife to achieve both individual and complementary integration.

Their struggles, both within themselves and with one another, are archetypal, and provide a basic comment on the social entity they represent. "More than any fictional world of naturalistic determinism, Woolf's world of baffling multiplicity and psychic insularity seems to suggest the basic existential absurdity or fruitlessness of human life"⁴⁴

Giles Oliver's virility had brought immediate approbation from Mrs. Manresa. His curling hair, firm features, and "something fierce, untamed, in the expression ... incited her, even at forty-five, to furbish up her ancient batteries" (33). But the "ghost of convention" has clothed the aspiring salmon fisherman in the garb of a "dapper city gent", and even more symbolically, in white flannels with blue coat and brass buttons, when the sight of the Manresa car tells him that there are guests for dinner. The repression of the masculine, instinctual violence hints at the compensatory sexual base of his outburst into negative and destructive action:

There, couched in the grass, curved in an olive green ring, was a snake. Dead? No, choked with a toad in its mouth. The snake was unable to swallow; the toad was unable to die. A spasm made the ribs contract; blood oozed. It was birth the wrong way round - a monstrous inversion. So, raising his foot, he stamped on them. The mass crushed and slithered. The white canvas on his tennis shoes was bloodstained and sticky. But it was action. Action relieved him. (65)

Concentrated in this one abortive action is Virginia Woolf's attitude of condemnation against the professional patriarch. Despite his civilized, stockbroker's horror of the violence of war, his very actions reveal the thinly veiled impulses that destroy life directly - the lust for possession, the lust for war. Giles Oliver is the ominous patriarchal representative of England between the acts of battle.

Isa, unlike Mrs. Ramsay and Susan, is forced to voice despair at the debilitation of her instinctual impulses. Her verses, unlike the lines quoted by Mrs. Dalloway and Mrs. Ramsay, are not replete with meaning; they are, rather, an expression of her nervous romanticism:

'Where do I wander?' she mused. 'Down what draughty tunnels? Where the eyeless wind blows; And there grows nothing for the eye. No rose. To issue where? In some harvestless dim field where no evening lets fall her mantle; nor sun rises. All's equal there. Unblowing, ungrowing are the roses there. Change is not; nor the mutable and lovable; nor greetings nor partings; nor furtive findings and feelings, where hand seeks hand and eye seeks shelter from the eye.' (99-100)

For Isa, the creative, intuitive impulse was a "burden ... laid on her in the cradle; murmured by waves; breathed by restless elm trees; crooned by singing women ..." (100). As we shall see in the analysis of Virginia Woolf's symbols of androgyny, the significance of her commitment to this ideal state of fusion can be measured by her successful transformation of such unpromising material as Isa and Lily Briscoe into functional vehicles for the androgynous vision.

Bernard Blackstone has proposed an ideal transition from the dangerous oversimplifications which the foregoing analysis of polarities might presuppose:

Virginia Woolf has been called a feminist But more truly we might call her an androgynist because she puts the emphasis every time on what a man and a woman have to give each other, on the mystery of completion, and not on the assertion of separate superiorities.⁴⁵

However, in an even more perceptive comment, Blackstone at least hints at the necessity of distinguishing the feminist from the androgynous victory:

The theme of Virginia Woolf's novels is often precisely this: the patient effort of the woman towards the reintegration of the man. His resistance is not always overcome. To show things thus would be to falsify; life, in fact, offers few happy endings.⁴⁶

CHAPTER II

MANIFESTO, FANTASY, REALITY : A ROOM OF ONE'S OWN, ORLANDO, THE YEARS.

The ordered ranks of patriarchs and matriarchs explored in the preceding chapter indicate Virginia Woolf's belief that the cause of the lack of wholeness in the modern world is an obtrusive sexual consciousness. When this inevitable form of self-consciousness is applied to the writing of fiction, the resultant creation is inimical to the androgynous quest:

... no one will admit that he can possibly mistake a novel written by a man from a novel written by a woman. There is the obvious and enormous difference of experience in the first place; but the essential difference lies in the fact, not that men describe battles, and women the birth of children, but that each sex describes itself.¹

Thus, in A Room of One's Own, Virginia Woolf proposes two basic prerequisites for the novelist who is at least aware of the dangers of sexual determinism. Firstly, his characterizations of the opposite sex must be as convincing as the characterizations of his own. Further, the novelist must imagine a solution to human affairs which is based upon androgynous affection. The progress from A Room of One's Own through Orlando to The Years is a circular achievement, embracing sociological doctrine, fantasy, and a final blend of psychological romance and sociological realism. In these works we can see Virginia Woolf exploring, in widely different forms, the ideal of androgyny. Although Eleanor is neither artist nor poet, her androgynous achievement is placed in

perspective when she is juxtaposed with Orlando, and promulgated as an essential prelude to Bernard.

Thus far, we have assumed that woman, as symbol of intuitive knowledge, is somehow distinct from man, as symbol for intellectual knowledge. It seems that the celebration of the matriarchal achievement and the denigration of the patriarchy were of more significance in Virginia Woolf's characterizations before A Room of One's Own. Indeed, the germs of her earlier concept of androgyny seem haphazardly spread, as a glance at the precursors of the androgynous ideal will show. In conversation with Rachel, in The Voyage Out, Clarissa Dalloway maintains that her husband was essentially androgynous. "He gave me all I wanted. He's man and woman as well" (57). In the same novel, Evelyn comments that there was "something of a woman" (250) in Terence. Of more significance is the description of Katharine and Cassandra, in Night and Day, as representing "very well the manly and womanly sides of the feminine nature" (317). Later, in Jacob's Room, the feeling that Bonamy has for Jacob could be regarded as similar to the attraction Clarissa Dalloway admits for Sally Seton. In To the Lighthouse, Virginia Woolf refers in passing to a "manliness in the girlish hearts" (14) of Mrs. Ramsay's daughters. However, in each of these instances, any emphasis on the theme of androgyny is quickly subordinated to the Proustian revival of past experience. After A Room of One's Own, it is possible to trace a more comprehensive and inexorable movement to Bernard, who observes that his biographer will note a conjunction of the feminine sensibility with the masculine, logical sobriety.

It was with A Room of One's Own that Virginia Woolf's particular brand of feminism was first invoked in a discussion of the problems of

the artist's sex. In effect, the organic link between Orlando and this feminist pamphlet is centred on an analysis of the androgynous nature of the true artist's mind. A Room of One's Own had grappled with the problem of woman's place in a literary tradition which was largely masculine in nature. Indeed, as the work reveals, the creative woman writer had to face the extreme difficulty of realising her potential in a basically masculine world, without, at the same time, violating her own nature as a woman. Again, the extremes of slavish imitation and revolutionary individualism had to be scrupulously avoided. An almost sacramental union of the masculine, critical side of the mind with the feminine, intuitive side is the informing base of both works. Orlando's change of sex is, therefore, correspondingly less fantastic when one views the gravity of the philosophical problem which lies behind it.

In the concluding section of A Room of One's Own, Virginia Woolf admits: "Perhaps to think, as I had been thinking these two days, of one sex as distinct from the other is an effort. It interferes with the unity of the mind" (95). As a more detailed analysis of the book's argument will show, this is the writer's admission of her inability to avoid the temptation of providing a list of grievances. Thus, in the earlier argument Virginia Woolf is guilty of special pleading in spite of the fact that

it is fatal for any one who writes to think of their sex. It is fatal to be a man or woman pure and simple; one must be woman-manly or man-womanly. It is fatal for a woman to lay the least stress on any grievance ... in any way to speak consciously as a woman. (102)

The artists, the painters, the writers are marked off from the deified, intuitive female and the castigated intellectual male in their freedom from any sexual determinism. The shadow of Sir Leslie Stephen's dry

intellection still dogged her, until her desire for the ideal prompted her to ask

whether there are two sexes in the mind corresponding to the two sexes in the body And I went on amateurishly to sketch a plan of the soul so that in each of us two powers preside, one male, one female; and in the man's brain the man predominates over the woman, and in the woman's brain the woman predominates over the man. The normal and comfortable state of being is that when the two live in harmony together, spiritually cooperating. If one is a man, still the woman part of the brain must have effect; and a woman also must have intercourse with the man in her. Coleridge perhaps meant this when he said that a great mind is androgynous. It is when this fusion takes place that the mind is fully fertilised and uses all its faculties. Perhaps a mind that is purely masculine cannot create, any more than a mind that is purely feminine. (96-97)

But Virginia Woolf has come to this central statement of belief by way of an intensely personal harangue. Fortunately, the writer who frequently acknowledges herself as no logician does provide a concrete setting in which to explore the idea of androgyny. Oxbridge and Fernham, while obvious caricatures of Oxford and Cambridge, Girton and Newnham, still coexist with an actual visit to the British Museum where she meditates on the vulnerability of women writers. She concludes that men, secure in their own pride, vanity, and egotism, have succeeded in excluding women from important positions in society and civilization. Denied the possibility of developing their potential freely and fully in the political and social spheres, women have turned to literature, the door to which men could not close, as the one viable outlet for their creative faculties. In her role as research scientist, Virginia Woolf admits the lack of critical faculties, in images which are immediately evocative of a Leslie Stephen or a Mr. Ramsay. "I should need claws of steel and beak of brass even to penetrate the husk. How shall I ever find the grains of truth embedded in all this mass of paper" (28).

The apparatus of masculine violence, of aggression, may take a literary form, and it is in that guise that Virginia Woolf examines the masculine author's literary creations. There hangs over her research the vision of a certain Professor von X engaged in writing his monumental work entitled The Mental, Moral and Physical Inferiority of the Female Sex.² "He was not in my picture a man attractive to women. He was heavily built; he had a great jowl; to balance that he had very small ideas; he was very red in the face" (32). Nevertheless, in spite of the brooding presence of this representative patriarch, she has to admit to an "undeniable, if very unfortunate, fact that it is the nature of the artist to mind excessively what is said about him" (58). Leonard Woolf, in his autobiography Downhill All The Way, repeatedly asserts the devastating effect that hostile criticism had on Virginia Woolf, so that we can see the extreme personal significance of her statement that "Literature is strewn with the wreckage of men who have minded beyond reason the opinions of others" (58). Therefore, her task was to mind less what the masculine critics had to say about her, and to turn her attention to that ideal and harmonious state where men and women could share the androgynous vision.

Virginia Woolf now moves to an analysis of women novelists, both real and imagined, in order to focus attention on their unique problems and achievements. It is axiomatic that the daily lives of women impart to them a vision of reality which is essentially different from the man's. In her review of Dorothy Richardson's, The Tunnel, Virginia Woolf concludes:

So 'him' and 'her' are cut out, and with them goes the old deliberate business: the chapters that lead up, and the chapters that lead down; the characters that are always characteristic; the scenes that are passionate and the scenes that are humorous; the elaborate construction of reality, the conception that shapes and surrounds the whole. All these things are cast away and there is left, divided, unsheltered, unbegun and unfinished,

the consciousness of Miriam Henderson, the small sensitive lumps of matter; half transparent and half opaque, which endlessly reflects and distorts the variegated procession and is, we are bidden to believe, the source beneath the surface, the very oyster within the shell.³

The final metaphor has obvious connections with the symbolism of "The Mark on The Wall", which will be examined below. For this reason she creates the imaginary novelist, Mary Carmichael, whose first novel, Life's Adventure, while no classic, shows important departures from the masculine tradition, discarding an alleged male myopia for vision. With the extremely significant advantage of at least partial emancipation, Mary traces her ancestry to Jane Austen and Emily Brontë, who "wrote as women write, not as men write. Of all the thousand women who wrote novels then, they alone entirely ignored the perpetual admonitions of the eternal pedagogue - write this, think that " (75).

Mary's first problem was a technical one. There was "no common sentence ready for her use" (76).⁴ The man's sentence which caused Charlotte Brontë to stumble and fall, which suffered atrocities at the hands of George Eliot, and which Jane Austen laughingly discarded for a more shapely vehicle, must first be reconstructed. "Mary is tampering with the expected sequence. First she broke the sentence; now she has broken the sequence" (81). She wrote no longer of accepted themes. "Speaking crudely, football and sport are 'important'; the worship of fashion, the buying of clothes 'trivial'" (74). Intuition and flux begin to assert their supremacy over logic and determinism, and in her exploration of the whole of experience she opens the door to areas of living hitherto untouched:

The extraordinary woman depends on the ordinary woman. It is only when we know what were the conditions of the average woman's life - the number of her children, whether she had money of her own, if she had a room to

street to the other diagonally a girl in patent leather boots, and then a young man in a maroon overcoat; it was also bringing a taxi-cab; and it brought all three together at a point directly beneath my window; where the taxi stopped; and the girl and the young man stopped; and they got into the taxi, and then the cab glided off as if it were swept by the current elsewhere. (95)

The sight of these two young people getting into the taxi seems to signify the ordinary condition of the heightened androgynous mind, which "resonant and porous ... transmits emotion without impediment ... is naturally creative, incandescent and undivided" (97). The incident, in itself, might seem trivial enough. For Virginia Woolf, at a key point in her thinking, it offers a signal reminder, "that it is natural for the sexes to cooperate" (96).

The final stage in Virginia Woolf's argument involves a classification of authors within the spectrum of androgyny. Galsworthy and Kipling are summarily relegated, since they "celebrate male virtues, enforce male values and describe the world of men The fact is that neither Mr. Galsworthy nor Mr. Kipling has a spark of the woman in him" (100-101). Shakespeare, however, was truly androgynous, "and so were Keats and Sterne and Cowper and Lamb and Coleridge. Shelley perhaps was sexless. Milton and Ben Jonson had a dash too much of the male in them. So had Wordsworth and Tolstoy. In our time Proust was wholly androgynous, if not perhaps a little too much of a woman" (102). If some of this arbitrary compartmentalizing appears a little glib, it would be of interest to look briefly at some of Virginia Woolf's critical writings to show how this preoccupation with androgyny is applied - sometimes with disastrous results.

Virginia Woolf's well-known attack on the Edwardians, Bennett, Wells, Galsworthy, and Kipling, that they "write of unimportant things;

that they spend immense skill and immense industry making the trivial and transitory appear true and enduring,"⁶ results from her reaction to their masculine minds. Thus, all their qualities seem to a woman "crude and immature. They lack suggestive power" (100). This, indeed, is the informing idea behind "Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown". It would appear that if Arnold Bennett did manage to capture the minutiae about Mrs. Brown, he would still have failed in the sense that he makes no connection between mere outward manifestations and an essentially inward state of being. Wells and Galsworthy would be accorded even slighter achievement, since their attention would be focussed beyond the figure seated opposite them, in contemplation of a true social saga. "Not one of the Edwardian writers has so much as looked at her ... never at her, never at life, never at human nature Mrs. Brown is eternal, Mrs. Brown is human nature."⁷ There is every indication of an allegorical intent in Virginia Woolf's picturing of the badgered old lady in the train. Mrs. Brown can be made to stand for the English novel, for too long subjected to the rough handling of the male novelist, for "fiction is a lady, and a lady who has somehow got herself into trouble."⁸

Since the Edwardians "have laid an enormous stress upon the fabric of things ... have given us a house in the hope that we may be able to deduce the human beings who live there,"⁹ they lay themselves open to the charge of materialism. The concern of the Georgians, on the other hand, is "spiritual; [Joyce] is concerned at all costs to reveal the flickerings of that innermost flame which flashes its message through the brain."¹⁰ However strong her attraction to writers like Joyce and Lawrence, who illumine intellect with intuition and therefore aspire to

herself, whether she had help in bringing up her family, if she had servants, whether part of the housework was her task - it is only when we can measure the way of life and the experience made possible to the ordinary woman that we can account for the success or failure of the extraordinary woman as writer.⁵

It is of some significance that Mary Carmichael can write that Chloe likes Olivia, that they share a laboratory, and if

Mary Carmichael knows how to express it, she will light a torch in that vast chamber where nobody has yet been. It is all half lights and profound shadows like those serpentine caves where one goes with a candle peering up and down, not knowing where one is stepping. (83-84)

It is the exploration of these internal caverns which is one of the necessary prerequisites of androgyny. Similarly, it is important to note that this solitary and divided self, in her attempt to become one with a hostile universe, parallels Virginia Woolf's attempts to create herself and her world before she could project anything out of herself as artistic creation. The interest is centred on the mind as a creative power, not as a mere instrument for sensation or classification. Mary Carmichael has "mastered the first great lesson; she wrote as a woman, but as a woman who has forgotten that she is a woman, so that her pages were full of that curious sexual quality which comes only when sex is unconscious of itself" (92).

Equally significant as a basis for Virginia Woolf's symbolic equivalents of androgyny is an incident which immediately precedes her own visionary moment, already described. Following the intellectual stress of marshalling her attacks on the patriarchy, she allows her mind a respite from turmoil, and gazes absentmindedly out the window:

Nothing came down the street; nobody passed. A single leaf detached itself from the plane tree at the end of the street, and in that pause and suspension fell. Somehow it was like a signal falling, a signal pointing to a force in things which one had overlooked. It seemed to point to a river, which flowed past, invisibly, round the corner, down the street and took people and eddied them along Now it was bringing from one side of the

androgyny, she finds curious reasons for rejecting their achievement as well. On one level, she accuses the Georgians of overreacting:

The literary convention of the time is so artificial ... that, naturally, the feeble are tempted to outrage and the strong are led to destroy the very foundations and rules of literary society. Signs of this are everywhere apparent. Grammar is violated; syntax disintegrated; as a boy staying with an aunt for the week-end rolls in the geranium bed out of sheer desperation as the solemnities of the Sabbath wear on.¹¹

However, one feels that these syntactical excesses are venial compared with the effronteries to her sex and class affiliations. Leonard Woolf has given one view:

The myth of Virginia as Queen of Bloomsbury and culture, living in an ivory drawing room or literary and aesthetic hothouse still persists to some extent. I think that there is no truth in this myth. Her most obvious fault, as a person and as a writer, was a kind of intellectual and social snobbery - and she admitted it herself. There is also sometimes a streak of incongruous archness in her humour which is almost ladylike and very disconcerting. But her novels, and still more her literary criticism show that she had not a trace of the aesthetic or hypercultured ... although she was a cultured woman, the roots of her personality and her art were not in culture, and she had a streak of the common sense, down to earth, granitic quality of mind and soul characteristic in many generations of her father's family.¹²

Yet her inability to appreciate D.H. Lawrence provides the most damning indictment of Leonard Woolf's perhaps too loyal viewpoint. She was inevitably drawn to Lawrence, a childless writer as well, but she cannot accord him any degree of achievement because of his background. Like Paul Morel, he "was a miner's son and [the fact that] he disliked his conditions gave him a different approach to writing from those who have a settled station and enjoy circumstances which allow them to forget what those circumstances are."¹³ Surely the basic problem is that here is a male, without a room of his own, who creates in the very teeth of economic and social disadvantage.

Even more significantly, the evidence contained in Lawrence's

critical writings, together with the insistent examination of the qualities of male and female experience in his art, indicate a concern with the principle of androgyny, at least analogous to Virginia Woolf's.

Shortly before the rewriting of The Rainbow Lawrence wrote to

A.W. McLeod:

I think the only resourcing of art, revivifying it, is to make it more the joint work of men and women. I think the one thing to do, is for men to have the courage to draw nearer to women, expose themselves to them, and to be altered by them; and for women to accept and admit men. That is the start - by bringing themselves together, men and women - revealing themselves each to the other, gaining great blind knowledge and suffering and joy, which it will take a big further lapse of civilization to exploit and work out. Because the source of all life and knowledge is in man and woman, and the source of all living is in the interchange and the meeting and mingling of these two: man-life and woman-life, man-knowledge and woman-knowledge, man-being and woman-being.¹⁴

In Lawrence's argument, artistic creation appears to derive as much from the polarity between the intellect and feeling, the male and female, as from fruitful coition and the interaction of male and female elements within the self. The further evidence in Lawrence's "Study of Thomas Hardy" utilizes the same dichotomy between intellect and intuition explored by Virginia Woolf. The male is characterized by abstraction, the potency of the mind, knowledge, the stalk, and light. Obversely, the female world is made up of feeling, the potency of the flesh, a commitment to nature, the body, and darkness. However, in one of his central statements, Lawrence argues along lines which immediately call to mind Virginia Woolf's image of the androgynous mental condition:

A man who is well balanced between male and female, in his own nature, is, as a rule, happy, easy to mate, easy to satisfy and content to exist. It is only a disproportion or a dissatisfaction, which makes the man struggle into articulation.¹⁵

The particular area of disagreement remains, of course, in the Georgian treatment of sex. "Mr. Joyce's indecency in Ulysses seems to me the conscious and calculated indecency of a desperate man who feels

that in order to breathe he must break the windows."¹⁶ Virginia Woolf elaborates this point in more detail in an essay on Hemingway:

The greatest writers lay no stress on sex one way or the other. The critic is not reminded as he reads them that he belongs to the masculine or feminine gender. But in our time, thanks to our sexual perturbations, sex consciousness is strong, and shows itself in literature by an exaggeration, a protest of sexual characteristics which in either case is disagreeable. Thus Mr. Lawrence, Mr. Douglas and Mr. Joyce partly spoil their books for women readers by their display of self-conscious virility All we can do, whether we are man or woman, is to admit the influence, look the fact in the face, and so hope to stare it out of countenance.¹⁷

Within the context of A Room of One's Own the male-imposed edict of chastity had been largely responsible for the reaction and unfortunate fate met by the hypothetical female Shakespeare:

Chastity had then, it has even now, a religious importance in a woman's life, and has so wrapped itself round with nerves and instincts that to cut it free and bring it to the light of day demands courage of the rarest. (51)

We must simply assume for the moment, with Ralph Samuelson, that "Virginia Woolf wants to believe in 'easy morals' - whatever they are - and in the vigour of the lower classes ... but remains ... tied pretty firmly to her own class and sex."¹⁸

She further continues her attack on Lawrence by wondering at the gulf between his prophetic powers and his possible status as a novelist. Certainly he will be no Proust, because "one feels that he echoes nobody, continues no tradition, is unaware of the past; or the present as it affects the future."¹⁹ It is a pity that she had not read the opening chapters of The Rainbow where the Brangwen links with the soil of pre-industrial England clamour for comparison with Hardy's Wessex. Her final attack on the failure of Lawrence in the area of disciplined, aesthetic use of language is far too harsh: "One feels that not a single word has

been chosen for its beauty or its effect upon the architecture of the sentence."²⁰ Still, it is important to point the integrity and honesty of Virginia Woolf's commitment in the light of a final, more balanced assessment which leads to the underlying concerns of Orlando. In a review of The Lost Girl she concludes:

We conceived him to be a writer with an extraordinary sense of the physical world, of the colour and texture and shape of things, for whom the body was alive and the problem of the body insistent and important. It was plain that sex had for him a meaning which it was disquieting to think that we, too, might have to explore.²¹

Before we trace Virginia Woolf's androgynous concerns in the rather essayistic Orlando, two Diary notations will reveal the problems a woman writer faces in a literary world dominated by the male:

I was beckoned by [E.M.] Forster from the Library as I approached. We shook hands very cordially; and yet I always feel him shrinking from me sensitively, as a woman, a clever woman, an up to date woman. (12)

On a later occasion, when Virginia Woolf was fifty-three, a similar meeting produced an unusually venomous response:

I met Morgan in the London Library yesterday and flew into a passion.... "And, Virginia, you know I'm on the Committee here", said Morgan. "And we've been discussing whether to allow ladies" - It came over me they were going to put me on "Oh but they do," I said. "There was Mrs. Green." "Yes, yes. There was Mrs. Green. And Sir Leslie Stephen said never again. She was so troublesome. And I said haven't ladies improved? But they were all quite determined. No, no, no ladies are quite impossible. They wouldn't hear of it."

See how my hand trembles I thought how perhaps M. had mentioned my name, and they had said no no no: ladies are impossible. (243)

This anger led to the vitriolic Three Guineas, and the incidents are quoted simply to set in perspective the desire for satire and fantasy, for fun and freedom which lies at the base of Orlando's vigour and vivacity. At the same time, most recent critical estimates see the book as an authentic repository of the author's thought. Jean Guiget's view is representative:

Standing between the feminist preoccupations of Night and Day and the pamphlet A Room of One's Own, Orlando reveals the living substance that fed Virginia Woolf's feminism The fantastic, changeable, ambiguous and irrational character of Orlando is merely the diversity that lies within each of us [but mostly refers] to the author's own dual nature.²²

To stress the serious concerns underlying these books, we can refer again to the Diary where Virginia Woolf asserts that "Orlando was the outcome of a perfectly definite, indeed over-mastering impulse" (136). She had noted previously:

How extraordinarily unwilling by me, but potent in its own right by the way Orlando was! as if it shoved everything aside to come into existence. Yet I see looking back just now to March, that it is almost exactly in spirit, though not in actual facts, the book I planned then as an escapade; the spirit to be satiric, the structure wild. Precisely. (120)

Both Constance Hunting²³ and John Graham²⁴ have argued conclusively that Orlando can be no holiday from purely functional technique. While the Diary records that Orlando was indeed "a very quick, brilliant book" (136), Virginia Woolf goes on to assert that "there are offices to be discharged by talent for the relief of genius: meaning that one has the play side; the gift when it is mere gift, unapplied gift; and the gift when it is serious, going to business. And one relieves the other" (137-138). While Virginia Woolf's talent finds expression in her critique of the masculine biographer, her genius and vision clamour for inclusion in the novel's concluding section, thus making a mockery of the book's structure. One final, cryptic, Diary insertion should set the seal on the developmental place of Orlando: "Orlando leading to The Waves" (105).

Over a period of 342 years, the hero-heroine Orlando grows from an Elizabethan boy of sixteen to a twentieth century woman of thirty-six. It is of some importance to summarise the roles that the central figure plays in this fantasy of metamorphosis. As a youth, Orlando was favoured

of Elizabeth I and acted as her treasurer and steward. However, he fell out of favour and into exile because of his failure to marry Euphrosyne - the Lady Margaret O'Brien O'Dare O'Reilly Tyrconnell. Instead, he pursues a passionate but unhappy affair with Sasha - the Princess Marousha Stanislovska Dagmar Natasha Iliana Romanovitch. Orlando then finds himself the object of the affections of the Archduchess Harriet Griselda of Finster Aarhorn and Scandop-Boom in Romania. To escape her clutches he moves to Turkey as ambassador for Charless II. It is here, while being honoured for his services to the state, that his sex magically changes. She now finds refuge with a gypsy band, before a nostalgic desire for the English countryside calls her back to England aboard The Enamoured Lady. Of course, the English law courts take something like a hundred years to settle the matter of her sex, before she is pronounced indisputably a woman, and her three sons by the Spanish dancer Rosina Pepita are declared illegitimate. (The second Lord Sackville, Lionel, and Vita's gypsy grandmother, Pepita, underwent a similar legal wrangle over the legitimacy of their children).²⁵ Now, the miraculously changed Archduke Harry attempts to force his attentions on the Lady Orlando, but he is more than a little dismayed by her cheating at Fly Loo and her unladylike behaviour with some toads.

The next phase finds her in Blackfriars in search of life and a lover, frequenting the salons of Pope and Addison. There is a suggestion of lesbianism, as she frequently changes her clothing and is rather indiscriminate in her choice of companions. At last the androgynous Victorian Lady Orlando marries the equally androgynous Marmaduke Bonthrop Shelmerdine Esquire, who leaves on their wedding night for his voyage around the Cape. Orlando finally bears a son and carries off the Burdett

Coutts Memorial Prize for literature with her poem, "The Oak Tree", begun in 1586. Mary Electra Kelsey's summation states that Orlando's experiences simply show that there is very little difference between man and woman. "A person is an individual, not a gender."²⁶

Orlando provides a reinforcement of the theories propounded in A Room of One's Own, particularly in the area of the androgynous mind of the writer. As Virginia Woolf states in the manifesto: Some collaboration has to take place in the mind between the woman and the man before the art of creation can be accomplished. Some marriage of opposites must be consummated. The whole of the mind must be wide open if we are to get the sense that the writer is communicating his experience with perfect fullness. There must be freedom and there must be peace.(103) The celebrated change of sex and the frequent changes of clothes are dramatic equivalents for the idea of androgyny. Orlando's quest as poet-poetess, over 350 years, is for the true meaning of nature, life, and art for the artist. In addition, she is truly a composite figure, representing not only Victoria Sackville-West and Virginia Woolf, but also intellectual women in general. When she finally publishes "The Oak Tree" in the late nineteenth century, she signals the beginning of acceptance of the female writer in English literature. What particularly attracted Virginia Woolf was "not so much the anthropological originality of Orlando as the infinite variety of combinations possible in a character thus shorn of the usual human constraints."²⁷

"He - for there could be no doubt about his sex, though the fashion of the time did something to disguise it - was in the act of slicing at the head of a Moor which swung from the rafters" (9). The opening sentence of the book establishes the intrinsic possibility of Orlando's androgyny. Indeed, the reader is presented with many preliminary hints of the duality of the human spirit, so that he will accept the more readily the change of sex around which the novel hinges. In appearance Orlando is nothing short of

beautiful - red cheeks covered with peach down, lips revealing teeth of an exquisite and almond whiteness - but most provocatively of all, "eyes like drenched violets" (10). Orlando fulfils the Elizabethan ideal of the courtier-soldier-scholar and is dashing, masculine, and violent. Moreover, a complementary note of morbidity and introspection heralds his withdrawal in the early seventeenth century. She is the efficient hostess at the Augustan literary tea parties, yet blushes and swoons seemingly in the grip of Victorian sentimentality.

As an index of the liberation that the theme of sexual duality and the informing mode of fantasy bequeathed to Virginia Woolf, it is of interest to note that she almost deals openly with sexual matters:

Hot with skating and with love Orlando and Sasha would throw themselves down in some solitary reach, where the yellow osiers fringed the bank, and wrapped in a great fur cloak Orlando would take her in his arms, and know, for the first time, he murmured, the delights of love. Then, when the ecstasy was over and they lay lulled in a swoon on the ice, he would tell her of his other loves. (31)

There is an animality here, paralleled only in the climax of Between the Acts when the curtain rises to end the hiatus in the Giles-Isa relationship: "Before they slept they must fight: after they had fought they would embrace. From that embrace another life might be born. But first they must fight, as the dog fox fights with the vixen, in the heart of darkness, in the fields of night" (140). Sasha, too, was "like a fox" - "Sasha because it was the name of a white Russian fox he had had as a boy - a creature soft as snow, but with teeth of steel which bit him so savagely that his father had it killed" (31-32).

After Sasha's desertion, Orlando's deep sleep of despair, which lasted for seven days, directly prefigures the change of sex: "For though he was perfectly rational and seemed graver and more sedate in

his ways than before, he appeared to have an imperfect recollection of his past life" (47). The seven-day sleep and the clouding of memory are more easily accepted when the metamorphosis occurs, but of more importance is the spectacle and pageantry which will serve the dual purposes of distracting the reader's attention from the event, and of providing Virginia Woolf with opportunities to satirize the masculine bureaucracy and the rigid biographer:

Six Turks of the Imperial Body Guard, each over six feet in height, held torches to his right and left. Rockets rose into the air at his appearance, and a great shout went up from the people Next, Sir Adrian Scrope, in the full dress of a British Admiral, advanced; the Ambassador knelt on one knee; the Admiral placed the Collar of the Most Noble Order of the Bath round his neck, then pinned the Star to his breast; after which another gentleman of the diplomatic corps advancing in a stately manner placed on his shoulders the ducal robes, and handed him on a crimson cushion the ducal coronet. (91)

But this official Gazette report with its ironic emphasis on recorded pomp and fact tends to ignore the following scene of complete confusion, reminiscent of the festival at Mau in A Passage to India:

... as the coronet settled on Orlando's brows a great uproar rose. Bells began ringing; the harsh cries of the prophets were heard above the shouts of the people; many Turks fell flat to the ground and touched the earth with their foreheads. (92)

This sacrilege against masculine vanity is finally quelled by a hundred blue-jackets. "So far, we are on the firm, if rather narrow, ground of ascertained truth" (92). There follows an amorous interlude with "a woman, much muffled, but apparently of the peasant class" (92), after which the biographer draws the curtain on the sleeping Orlando, only to withdraw it when the hero stands before us, a woman.

The ritual masque which precedes the change of sex is Virginia Woolf's objectification of the conflict and ultimate reconciliation of intellect and intuition. It represents the victory of androgyny over

masculine biography, as Orlando emerges from the dream as both an artist in the full artistic tradition and a woman in the full sense of womanhood. Truth, Candour, and Honesty do battle with "our Lady of Purity; whose brows are bound with fillets of the whitest lamb's wool ... our Lady of Chastity; on whose brow is set like a turret of burning but unwasting fire a diadem of icicles ... our Lady of Modesty ... whose face is only shown as the young moon shows when it is thin and sickle-shaped and half hidden among the clouds" (94-95). As the trumpets sound the departure of these last three symbols of feminine subjugation, they declare their final defiance:

We go; we go. I (Purity says this) to the hen roost. I (Chastity says this) to the still unravished heights of Surrey. I (Modesty says this) to any cosy nook where there are ivy and curtains in plenty.

For there, not here ... dwell still in nest and boudoir, office and lawcourt those who love us; those who honour us, virgins and city men; lawyers and doctors; those who prohibit; those who deny; those who reverence without knowing why ... the still very numerous ... tribe of the respectable; who prefer to see not; desire to know not; love the darkness; those still worship us, and with reason; for we have given them Wealth, Prosperity, Comfort, Ease. (96)

Truth has conquered; androgyny has conquered. As the sisters retire in haste, Orlando wakes: "He stood upright in complete nakedness before us, and ... we have no choice left but confess - he was a woman" (97). It is as much a victory for intuition over intellect as an indication of the Bergsonian victory over intellectual rigidity. The total significance of this dream-like transformation is that

intuition is mind itself, and in a certain sense, life itself: the intellect has been cut out of it by a process resembling that which has generated matter. Thus is revealed the unity of the spiritual life. We recognize it only when we place ourselves in intuition in order to go from intuition to the intellect, for from the intellect we shall never pass into intuition.²⁸

The whole sequence of glittering, yet empty, masculine ceremonial, of the succeeding disturbance in the streets, the recondite liaison, the

seven-day sleep and the final release is entirely symbolic of the movement out of bondage into freedom. Purity, Chastity, Modesty, the representatives of the confining areas of living ("boudoir, office, lawcourt"), and the professional symbols of male repressiveness (the "virgins, city men, lawyers, doctors"), have been banished forever. The elimination of Chastity calls to mind the more doctrinaire Three Guineas, where the argument runs along particularly bitter lines:

Chastity, then, as defined by St. Paul, is seen to be a complex conception based upon the love of long hair; the love of subjection; the love of an audience; the love of laying down the law, and, subconsciously upon a very strong and natural desire that the woman's mind and body shall be reserved for the use of one man and one man only.²⁹

Suffice it to say that Virginia Woolf seems to revel, quite uncharacteristically, in a release which repeats the nakedness of Orlando. "No human being since the world began has ever looked so ravishing" (97). But the critic who had objected so strongly to Joyce and Lawrence is quick to assert: "... let other pens treat of sex and sexuality; we quit such odious subjects as soon as we can" (98). Traditions, customs, and laws are founded on an arbitrary generalization about the absolute distinction between the sexes. As soon as this is shown to be an illusion, albeit on the level of fantasy, the whole system appears grotesque and unjust.

Thus, the central scene involving the change of sex illustrates the substance of Virginia Woolf's attack on the masculine biographer. In his pompous self-importance we have seen him place a childish credence in thoroughly documented evidence alone. He attempts to make common sense the measure of all things, and is uncompromising in his battle against values arrived at by other than epistemological means. The more

visionary aspects of life, such as imagination or dream, are beyond him.

As John Graham concludes:

For all his learning and labour, the biographer does not understand his subject; and when understanding Orlando's life began to engross Virginia Woolf's serious attention he became an encumbrance instead of a joke and disappeared from the book. ³⁰

Interestingly enough, Orlando shows no perturbation after the event, which seems to vindicate Virginia Woolf's expertise in externalizing an existing condition of androgyny.

Orlando had become a woman - there is no denying it. But in every other respect, Orlando remained precisely as he had been. The change of sex, though it altered their future, did nothing whatever to alter their identity. (97) [Emphasis added].

The biographer and the novelist do come into conflict over the question of Orlando's frequent changes of clothing, which Virginia Woolf explains in this way:

Different though the sexes are, they intermix. In every human being a vacillation from one sex to the other takes place, and often it is only the clothes that keep the male or female likeness, while underneath the sex is the very opposite of what is above. (133)

Thus the author is careful to provide us with an androgynous spectrum to lend support to this assertion. Initially, Sasha appears as a youth to Orlando, while later she actually dresses as a man. The Archduchess Harriet is seen to perpetrate a subterfuge. In his proper guise as the Archduke Harry he admits "that he was a man and always had been one."

(126) However, we cannot lightly dismiss Constance Hunting's assertion that he is "a deformity of the duality which Orlando represents

When he dons the clothes of a woman he remains masculine in body, and when he wears the appropriate clothes of a man he remains feminine in personality."³¹

Just as Orlando was not wholly woman in an essentially healthy sense, so

the Archduke, if taken as male, illustrates a species of perversion, whereby his pathetic inability to communicate illustrates his only partial success in throwing off the limitations of a purely intellectual self.

Inevitably, Marmaduke must be androgynous to be a fitting mate for Orlando, with her capacity "to refuse and to yield ... to pursue and to conquer ... to perceive and to reason" (114). Such an alliance would be absolutely essential to Orlando, the writer, who was forced to vacillate: "... she was man; she was woman; she knew the secrets, shared the weaknesses of each. It was a most bewildering and whirligig state of mind to be in" (112). James Hafley sums up most admirably the significance of this "marriage of true minds", when he states that Orlando can achieve a balance of intellect and intuition possible only in a fantasy The mentally androgynous man and woman can understand each other with a perfection impossible to those barred behind the limitations of their sex. When Orlando and Marmaduke meet they understand each other immediately:
 "An awful suspicion rushed into both their minds simultaneously.
 'You're a woman, Shel!' she cried.
 'You're a man, Orlando!' he cried."
 The truth is that both are androgynous To be only a man in mind, or only a woman ... is to be hopelessly isolated and to perish.³²

Truth had been affirmed in the curious metamorphosis, but does Orlando herself attain truth, the symbolic wild goose, and thereby attain perfect androgyny? Her return to England had been precipitated, not because she was an English alien in a camp of gypsies, but because she was a writer and a woman. The changes and unpredictable state of her mind already noticed seem to offer little prospect for achievement as she first timidly hides her manuscripts, preferring simply to soak up the wit of Swift, Pope, and Addison. Finally, in the nineteenth century there is no time, what with bearing children and raising them. Eventually the

inevitable moment arrives:

So that it is the most usual thing in the world for a person to call, directly they are alone, Orlando? (if that is one's name) meaning by that, Come, come! I'm sick to death of this particular self. I want another ... still the Orlando she needs may not come; these selves of which we are built up, one on top of another, as plates are piled on a waiter's hand, have attachments elsewhere, sympathies, little constitutions and rights of their own ... for everybody can multiply from his own experience the different terms which his different selves have made with him (217-218)

One's name could as easily be Virginia Woolf whose search is among her changing moods, her alternate fits of self-confidence, enthusiasm and discouragement. Is the true self that which leans towards society or that which yearns for solitude? The dichotomy exists also between the active self and the passionate devotee of literature and the contemplative life. The accusation that she levels at Sterne can be given voice.³³ It is her own mind that fascinates her; its oddities and its whims, its fancies, and its sensibilities colour the book and give it walls and shape. Orlando can fortunately call upon "the conscious self, which is the uppermost and has the power to desire, wishes to be nothing but one self ..." (219). She does achieve the "compact of all the selves we have it in us to be; commanded and locked up by the Captain self, the Key self which amalgamates and controls them all" (219). The intuitional moment arrives when "she was now darkened, stilled and become, with the addition of this Orlando, what is called, rightly or wrongly, a single self, a real self" (222).

However, the technique of fantasy has done irreparable harm to the credibility of both Orlando and her biographer. Shel's reappearance, as a fairly literal deus ex machina, attempts to jolt us back to the fantastic. By now the reader can be excused his dismay at the inter-relation of literary types to which he has been exposed. Fantasy, novel,

biography, poem, and history create in him a state of mind which prompts Jean Guiget's expression of uncertainty: "... it is at the same time a book, a mask, and a confidential message, and one is never quite sure with which of the three one is dealing."³⁴ Orlando is certainly meant to signify the contemporary mind, conscious of the androgynous past as he-she perceives and writes on any given day. But the attainment of the wild goose could hardly bear comparison with the more integrated symbols of lighthouse and wave; it is too obviously planted. At least in the solitude and independence of a room of one's own, the androgynous artist is neither man nor woman, but a bisexual spirit at grips with reality and in pursuit of the wild goose:

Orlando can be at once the manly woman and the womanly man - she can achieve a balance of intuition and intellect possible only in fantasy; thus before her complete perception of reality, she has become a 'real woman', so that her final realization of herself transcends the fantastic. It is for this reason that her vision of truth - the wild goose - is not possible until her husband (who drops from an airplane) joins her.³⁵

The fact inevitably remains that Virginia Woolf, the feminist, has succeeded in her aims. She has broken down the conventions established by the male novelist, but at the expense of Orlando's being remembered chiefly as a woman, not as a man - and, unfortunately, not as a combination of both. Beneath the surface fantasy we are forced to recognize the serious battle of the intellectual woman for recognition.

Orlando, to extend Virginia Woolf's marginal Diary notation, led as much to The Years as to The Waves. Only slightly removed from Orlando's professed collaboration of masculine intellect and feminine intuition is Virginia Woolf's espousal in The Years of "a system that did not shut out" (Diary, 189). The desire for such a system was prompted by Virginia Woolf's objection to D.H. Lawrence's didacticism and compart-

mentalizing. It is as well at this stage to set against the fantastic achievement of Orlando the admitted sociological and ideological concerns of The Years. In the Diary Virginia Woolf had stated: "It's to be an Essay-Novel, called The Pargiters - and it's to take in everything, sex, education and life" (189). However, the major point to be made here is that Eleanor's integration of rational mind and poetic imagination, her merging of the solitary and social selves, provides a minor climactic, surpassed only by the achievement of Bernard in The Waves.

I propose, in the discussion of Eleanor's achievement, to draw a distinction between two ultimately related types of androgyny - psychic and sociological. Psychic androgyny, as A Room of One's Own indicates, is the unification of the sexes within the mind of the artist as a necessary prerequisite for creation. Sociological androgyny proposes a balance of private and public selves, roughly corresponding to the masculine and feminine principles. To make this position clear we have only to recall Mr. Ramsay's self-centred isolation which is counterpointed by Mrs. Ramsay's other-centred commitment to the social group. That Virginia Woolf recognized the need for a similar, personal synthesis emerges in this Diary entry:

The dream is too often about myself. To correct this; and to forget one's own sharp, absurd little personality, reputation and the rest of it, one should read; see outsiders; think more; write more logically; above all be full of work; and practise anonymity. Silence in company; or the quietest statement not the showiest; is also "medicated" as the doctors say. (121)

The general critical disapprobation of The Years centres on its emphasis on the casual and commonplace, a regression to the social realism of The Voyage Out and Night and Day. Peculiarly, like Orlando, the novel suffers from a structural inconsistency where "the predominantly bleached

and negative tone of the first part"³⁶ undermines the lyricism of the final section which culminates in Eleanor's androgynous vision. Jean Guiget sees the Diary statement of aim as involving Virginia Woolf in a synthesis whose achievement seems problematical. Virginia Woolf had asserted:

I must be bold and adventurous. I want to give the whole of the present society - nothing less: facts as well as vision. And to combine them both. I mean The Waves going on simultaneously with Night and Day. Is this possible?.... How am I to get the depth without becoming static? (197)

For Guiget, then,

these intuitions of the different levels of consciousness, of the different layers of the mind seem to have crystallised, not into a theory, which would imply too much precision and too much logic, but into a complete vision which The Years tries in vain to unify in the sweep of artistic creation.³⁷

W.H. Mellers is typically slick and scathing when he complains of the impossibility of finding

tragedy in the aging of persons who are non-existent, and, far from having the rounded vitality of Mrs. Ramsay, the characters have not the factitious existence of the collections of phrases that make up the personae of The Waves. These people are phantoms; they grow old but they cannot change because they have never been alive; in so far as they exist at all, it is as a bundle of memories. The book is a document of purposelessness.³⁸

Deborah Newton echoes this pessimism as she notes "a curious feeling of hopelessness"³⁹ on which the novel ends. These are harsh judgments indeed for a visionary heroine who is at least in contact with the world of "Monday or Tuesday". Eleanor moves in a real world of awareness of self, both solitary and social. James Hafley virtually stands alone in his perception of the promise of uplift and renewal which is crystallised in Eleanor's final epiphany:

Eleanor as one individual realizes the present moment ... she has grasped the total meaning of her own life. But Eleanor must perceive her knowledge as means rather than end.... The private Eleanor can say she has had her vision; the public Eleanor recognizing that vision as a means must ask

"And now?" 40

We are led to believe in Orlando that the sudden appearance of "the captain self", like Lily Briscoe's "I have had my vision", are Proustian victories over "Time Past". But for the heroine of The Years

There must be another life Not in dreams; but here and now, in this room with living people She hollowed her hands in her lap ... she felt that she wanted to enclose the present moment; to make it stay; to fill it fuller and fuller, with the past, the present and the future, until it shone, whole, bright, deep with understanding. (343-344)

Thus, Eleanor's integrated personality, her fusion of solitary and social selves, asserts the relationship between inner being and a constructive social placement. In Mrs. Dalloway, nature had held out an unrealised promise, expressed in substantially the same images to that failed visionary, Septimus Smith:

He was not afraid. At every moment Nature signified by some laughing hint like that gold spot which went round the wall - there, there, there - her determination to show, by brandishing her plumes, shaking her tresses, flinging her mantle this way and that, beautifully, always beautifully, and standing close up to breathe through her hollowed hands Shakespeare's words, her meaning. (154-155)

Virginia Woolf herself was well aware that complete dependence on the inner life could lead either to wholeness or to a self-destructive neurosis. In the latter sense we will see Rhoda echo Septimus's failure. On the other hand, a healthy engagement of the social self may result in a secure establishment of personal relationships, but complete social immersion may just as easily lead to total loss of identity.

Eleanor's achievement is presented as a centrepiece around which are displayed the purely relative achievements of the other major protagonists. North Pargiter, the contemplative sheep farmer representing the male life of solitude, is set against his sister, Peggy, whose professional commitment sees her serving the social group, in danger of losing her

sense of identity. Or we could glance again at Edward's stultifying intellectualism, this time counterpointed by Milly's immersion in provincial society.

Maggie, Eleanor's cousin, asks the vital question, when, on her way to the ubiquitous dinner party, she says: "What's I? Am I that or am I this? Are we one or are we separate? ... (113). Similarly, North's remembered fragments of a conversation at Eleanor's party provide the first disquieting elements which war against his adopted stance of isolation. "If we do not know ourselves, how can we know other people? Was solitude good, was society bad? Solitary confinement is the greatest torture we inflict ..." (248-249). The conviviality of Eleanor's apartment is then exchanged for the dingy world of isolate reality inhabited by Sara. For her, society is a Wasteland, a "polluted city ... of dead fish and worn out frying pans" (284), a bath she shares with a Jew, who leaves the tub rimmed with a line of hair and grease. In a telling image, North recalls Eleanor's shower bath as he voices a desire for "life modelled on the jet ... on the spring, of the hard, leaping fountain; another life, a different life" (329). However, he feels compromised for he would like "to keep the emblems and tokens of North Pargiter ... but at the same time spread out, make a new ripple in human consciousness ... to be the bubble and the stream ... myself and the world together ..." (329-330). The passage from solitude to society is as difficult as that from intellect to intuition, especially when the context of fantasy, which allowed Orlando's achievement, is replaced by reality. North is forced to admit his far from successful attempt at integrating self and world. "But what do I mean, he wondered - I, to whom ceremonies are suspect, and religion's dead; who don't fit ... don't fit anywhere?" (330) His

phrasemaking fails him at a crucial point, just as it does Bernard, because he has lost "what's solid, what's true; in my life, in other people's lives" (330).

As the apparent impossibility of connection begins to assert itself, North turns to Eleanor who is inconspicuously untying a knot in her handkerchief. The knot has been placed there to remind her to speak to Edward about getting her porter's son into Oxford. It is for North to realize that the symbolic loosing of the knot portrays Eleanor's ability to escape the constriction of her own egotism, in an open act of social kindness. Her achievement almost provides him with the strength to make contact with Nicholas Pomjalovsky, even though they have not been properly introduced:

'What's this knot in the middle of my forehead? Untie it.' For he had had enough of thinking alone. Thinking alone tied knots in the middle of the forehead; thinking alone bred pictures, foolish pictures. The man was moving off. He must make the effort. Yet he hesitated. He felt repelled and attracted, attracted and repelled. (333)

His old aunt's ability to untie her knot, and her apparently aimless dozing, are thus contrasted with the selfish grasping of the isolated self.

Given Virginia Woolf's predilection for solitude, for her general preference for inner victories which preceded this novel, the achievement of The Years rests on a unique fusion of psychological romance and sociological tract. Her original intention, as the Diary indicates, had been to end the novel "with Elvira [Eleanor] going out of the house and saying, What did I make this knot in my handkerchief for - and all the coppers rolling about" (222). As we shall discover in the following chapter, Eleanor's vision is primarily social rather than individual. The apparently contingent - the spotted walrus on Eleanor's desk, the coins

for which Colonel Pargiter fumbles with his "curtailed fingers", the taxi which stops next door - are, in fact, functionally employed to underline a synthesis which combines both inner and outer reality.

Dorothy Brewster observes that

to bring inner and outer into harmony is the aim of many of Virginia Woolf's experiments in technique; and this harmony, when achieved at rare moments, is the perfect flowing together of the stream of consciousness and the stream of events. It is symbolized by one of her favourite images, that of the globe, which 'we spend our lives trying to shape, round, whole and entire from the confusion of chaos.' ⁴¹

In short, the veil of fantasy is withdrawn to reveal Eleanor as an anti-romantic figure assimilating both public and private values. Her sociological androgyny occupies the mid-point between Orlando's romanticism and Bernard's artistry.

CHAPTER III

SYMBOLS OF ANDROGYNY

The early story, "The Mark on the Wall", published in 1917, provides a most satisfactory starting point for an analysis of the idea of androgyny transmuted into symbol, and reinforces a critical statement on The Journals of Thomas James Cobden Sanderson: "Everything seems to suffer a curious magnification. Nothing exists in itself but only as a means of something else. The solid objects of daily life become rimmed with high purposes significant, symbolical."¹

"The Mark on the Wall" can certainly be seen in the sequence of apprenticeship essays, where Virginia Woolf gains practice at the aesthetic translation of psychic realities. Moreover, the essential contributions of such an exercise have been summarised by Freedman and Daiches in these terms:

The rendering of the 'moment' as an act of awareness, and its distillation in poetry or fiction solve the dilemma of solipsism by compelling the self to come to terms with the objects of its world.²

And again:

The desire to transcribe the naked consciousness on to the printed page, so characteristic of a great deal of modern fiction, is, in Virginia Woolf, subordinated to the desire for intelligibility, form and organisation.³

In the story, an old lady, lost in meditation, has her attention intermittently drawn to a spot on the wall, opposite where she is sitting. It is late afternoon, and she is disinclined to rise from her chair to

establish exactly what the mark is. The narrative traces the vacillation in her attempts to focus attention on the concrete object in front of her, the wanderings of her mind over the history of her house and the impossibility of prefiguring the future. She is overcome by a feeling of the fleeting nature of human experience which resembles "being blown through the Tube at fifty miles an hour - landing at the other end without a single hairpin in one's hair. Shot out at the feet of God entirely naked."⁴ She had deplored "what an accidental affair this living is", for the universe in flux seems to present a jumble where God, hairpins, brown paper parcels, and fields of asphodel are hopelessly intermixed. However, order asserts itself as two disparate principles emerge, based respectively on imagination and fact. Thoughts of God prompt premonitions of a supernatural realm where "there will be nothing but spaces of light and dark, intersected by thick stalks, and rather higher up perhaps, rose shaped blots of an indistinct colour - dim pinks and blues" (37). Under the potency of this illusion she attempts immersion, to sink away from the hard surface of material objects. But she is returned to reality as "the tree outside the window taps very gently on the pane..." (37). Obviously, living entirely in either of these realms, the specific or the eternal, is impossible, so she searches for a compromise:

To steady myself, let me catch hold of the first idea that passes... Shakespeare ... well he will do as well as another. A man who sat himself solidly in an armchair and looked into the fire, so - A shower of ideas fell perpetually from some very high Heaven down through his mind. (38)

It must be noted that again it is Shakespeare, the symbol of the androgynous mind, who offers the initial opportunity of reconciliation. But he is on the level of thoughts of eternity, too abstract, too removed from the

objects of daily life. "How dull this is, this historical fiction!" she complains. "It doesn't interest me at all" (38). Her thoughts return now to an allied dichotomy.

The disintegration of personality hinted at when Miss La Trobe holds mirrors up to her audience at the Pageant in Between the Acts, is anticipated, as the heroine of this story uses the mirror device to point to dual realities. One's own reflection, personally observed, is a "romantic figure with the green of forest depths all about it" (38). But this is an image of our inner aspirations, for the outsider sees merely the casing, which is "airless, shallow and bald" (38). This, in fact, is the pattern of life traced in the Edwardian novel. "As we face each other in omnibuses, and underground railways, we are looking into the mirror" (38). Virginia Woolf's preference for the inner world is immediately apparent: "The novelists in future will realize more and more the importance of these reflections ... those are the depths they will explore, those are the phantoms they will pursue, leaving the description of reality, more and more out of their stories (39). This extreme position is equally untenable, for

The military sound [of reality] is enough. It recalls leading articles, cabinet ministers - a whole class of things indeed, which, as a child, one thought the thing itself, the standard thing, the real thing, from which one could not depart save at the risk of nameless damnation. (39)

This swing of the mind's pendulum represents a return to the patriarchal childhood of Virginia Stephen as the old lady muses over chalk marks and Whitaker, that apotheosis of the male hierarchy.

In Virginia Woolf's writing, Whitaker has been a recurring symbol of the masculine propensity for measuring and ranking. The objection is made clear in A Room of One's Own:

I do not believe that even the Table of Precedency which you will find in Whitaker's Almanack represents a final order of values, or that there is any sound reason to suppose that a Commander of the Bath will ultimately walk into dinner behind a Master in Lunacy. (104)

William Rodney, though a master of prosody, could hardly be called an original or inspiring poet. At the other extreme, Susan, in The Waves, deplores the fact that the schoolmistresses "have made all the days of June ... shiny and orderly" (34), and that even piano scales are somehow unwholesome or arbitrary. "What now takes the place of those things," the old lady muses, "those real standard things? Men perhaps, should you be a woman; the masculine point of view which governs our lives ... which established Whitaker's Table of Precedency" (39). As the climax approaches, the woman, with an "intoxicating sense of illegitimate freedom", looks again at the mark on the wall to realize a feminine Utopia "without professors or specialists ... a world which one could slice with one's thought as a fish slices the water with his fin How peaceful it is down here, rooted in the centre of the world" (41). But Whitaker and the Table of Precedency shatter this vision once again, and she finds a release from this last-minute baulking of her aspirations by further considering the mark on the wall. She realises that Nature has been preserving her from absolute frustration: "Indeed now that I have fixed my eyes upon it, I feel that I have grasped a plank in the sea; I feel a satisfying sense of reality which at once turns the two Archbishops and the Lord High Chancellor to the shadows of shades" (42).

The masculine world of solid fact cannot be ignored, but a visionary state exists where intellect and intuition can marry. Thus, the mark on the wall, a snail with its protective outer shell and its

soft, animate, yet elusive centre, provides a living symbolic equivalent for the idea of androgyny. "A shell forms upon the soft soul," says Bernard in The Waves, "nacreous, shiny, upon which sensations tap their beaks in vain" (219). Dissatisfied with the progress she has been making in writing The Years, Virginia Woolf complains in the Diary: "No, I can't look at The Pargiters. It's an empty snail shell" (207). A similar idea occurs in A Room of One's Own, when, borrowing Henry James's analogy, the writer says that "fiction is like a spider's web, attached ever so lightly perhaps, but still attached to life at all four corners" (43). The mark on the wall is granite and rainbow, masculine fact and feminine imagination, joined in such a way as to give the lady and her creator an ultimate release.

Before proceeding to an analysis of the central symbol of the lighthouse and its associated images, three further image clusters should be examined. The first of these appears initially to be little more than a form of compensatory doodling. On further examination, however, the particular scrawl (spokes radiating from a dot or circle drawn on paper) becomes an expression of extreme emotional crisis for the characters involved. At the time, the relationship is inevitably that between male and female. Further exploration of the taxi symbol, already referred to in the discussion of A Room of One's Own, and an analysis of the man and woman seen symbolically against the sky must be undertaken.

Night and Day offers immediate interpretation along the lines of an ideal marriage between Ralph Denham and Katharine Hilbery. In a moment of estrangement, when the ideal seems beyond reach, Ralph sits down to write, in an attempt to communicate his feeling of closeness to Katharine:

... he had had a glimpse of the other evening when together they seemed to be sharing something, creating something, an ideal - a vision flung out in advance of our actual circumstances. If this golden rim were quenched, if life were no longer circled by an illusion (but was it an illusion after all?), then it would be too dismal an affair to carry to an end (452)

The literary translation of this vision proves beyond him, and his paper becomes filled with "blots fringed with flames meant to represent - perhaps the entire universe" (453). When Katharine later betrays an interest in these apparently purposeless and irrational impressionisms, an androgynous connection is immediately established:

It represented by its circumference of smudges surrounding a central blot all that encircling glow which for him surrounded, inexplicably, so many of the objects of life, softening their sharp outline, so that she could see certain streets, books, and situations wearing a halo almost perceptible to the physical eye. (458)

The hard, angular surfaces of masculine reality are suitably blurred by the operation of feminine vision.⁵

A similar exploitation of this image in The Years seems to reinforce the need to externalise an inexpressible vision of fusion. Eleanor Pargiter has been sitting passively at a feminist meeting, in the midst of a fierce altercation on the part of the other members. She finds herself drawing on the blotting paper in front of her, a black dot with spokes radiating from it. "If we could only get at something, something deeper, deeper, she thought, prodding her pencil on the blotting-paper. Suddenly she saw the only point that was of any importance" (144). But before she can put her ideas into words the meeting is declared closed. Again, in the novel's closing pages, just before the epiphany which follows her vision of the taxicab, the image recurs:

Millions of things came back to her. Atoms danced apart and massed themselves. But how did they compose what people called a life? She clenched her hands and felt the hard little coins she was holding. Perhaps there's 'I' at the middle of it, she thought; a knot; a centre; and again she saw

... drawing on the blotting-paper, digging little holes from which spokes radiated. (295)

Together with the image of the hard coins encircled within the soft palm, the dot with spokes radiating suggests that mingling of a solid intellectual core with an encompassing intuitional brilliance.

Dorothy Brewster records, that in The Years, the man and woman "who drove off in the taxi in A Room of One's Own have come home."⁶ In the feminist pamphlet the sight of the couple entering the taxi was immediately followed by the statement of Virginia Woolf's belief in psychic androgyny. The successful symbolic employment of this image, in The Years, accrues from the fact that it embraces the idea of sociological androgyny. The emphasis is placed on the social necessity of reconciling the inner and the outer life. At the opening of the novel, in 1880, Eleanor and Delia Pargiter have been sitting in the drawing room of the house in which their mother, "an impediment to all life" (20), lies dying. Delia's frustration reaches unbearable proportions when a hansom cab approaches, with the promise of some visitor to alleviate her boredom. But the cab stops further down the street, and the young man in a top hat descends to visit someone else:

Dropping the blind, Delia turned and, coming back to the drawing-room, said suddenly:

'Oh my God!'

Eleanor, who had taken her books again, looked up disturbed.

'Eight times eight ...' she said aloud. 'What's eight times eight?' Putting her finger on the page to mark the place, she looked at her sister

'Look here, Delia,' said Eleanor ... 'you've only got to wait ...' She meant but she could not say it, 'until Mama dies.'

'No, no, no,' said Delia 'It's hopeless.' (18)

In the closing section of the book, Eleanor, now an old woman, rides to a family reunion in a taxi with her niece, Peggy. Quite

emancipated, a doctor and a member of the professions, Peggy regards her aunt more or less as a Victorian relic. "The things she wants explained," she will tell a friend at the hospital, "are as simple as two and two makes four, or so difficult that nobody in the world knows the answer. And if you say to her 'What's eight times eight? ...'" (268). The verbal connection is seen to be far from accidental as Eleanor is aroused from one of her customary reveries by talk of repression, of her grandfather with his shiny stumps instead of fingers:

'Suppressed?' she repeated. She so seldom thought about herself now that she was surprised.

'Oh, I see what you mean,' she added after a moment. A picture ... had swum to the surface. There was Delia standing in the middle of the room; Oh, my God! Oh, my God! she was saying; a hansom cab had stopped at the house next door (269)

Eleanor has remained a spinster, unfulfilled, while Delia is an established mother and wife. One is left, then, with the question of the significance of Eleanor's final vision, when at dawn, she, like her author, gazes out the window to see a taxi discharge a young man and a girl in a tweed travelling suit:

A young man had got out; he paid the driver. Then a girl in a tweed travelling suit followed him. He fitted his latch-key to the door.

'There,' Eleanor murmured, as he opened the door and they stood for a moment on the threshold, 'There!' she repeated, as the door shut with a little thud behind them.

Then she turned round into the room. 'And now?' she said, looking at Morris who was drinking the last drops of a glass of wine. 'And now?' she asked, holding out her hands to him. (349)

In the context of optimism on which the novel ends, it is possible to conclude that through her vision a vicarious sharing is made possible for Eleanor, as she symbolically casts off her spinster state, achieving a self-sufficient bisexuality. "The sun had risen, and the sky above the houses wore an air of extraordinary beauty, simplicity and peace" (349).

The problem of writing in an age without a sound basis for belief had consistently disturbed Virginia Woolf:

It is an age of fragments. A few stanzas, a few pages, a chapter here and there, the beginning of this novel, the end of that, are equal to the best of any age or author. But can we go to posterity, with a sheaf of loose pages, or ask the readers of those days, with the whole of literature before them, to sift our enormous rubbish heaps for our tiny pearls?⁷

One answer to this question is explored through the use of an androgynous symbol which aspires to mythical status. At the close of Between the Acts Miss La Trobe complains: "Hadn't she for twenty-five minutes, made them see? A vision imparted was relief from agony ... for one moment ... one moment" (64). But the moment for most of the audience is only "orts, scraps and fragments" (123). Her artistic consciousness then imparts a vision of a new work. "'I should group them,' she murmured, 'here.' It would be midnight; there would be two figures half-concealed by a rock. The curtain would rise. What would the first words be? The words escaped her" (134-135). The possibilities here haunt her, and a little later the outlines become clearer. "There was the high ground at midnight; there the rock; and two scarcely perceptible figures She set down her glass. She heard the first words" (136). Universality in the particular is ensured as the twentieth century night becomes one with the Stone Age, and Giles and Isa assume the status of archetypal figures, shedding the masks of word and gesture that are the conventions of the world of propriety and appearances:

Isa let her sewing drop. The great hooded chairs had become enormous. And Giles too. And Isa too against the window. The window was all sky without colour. The house had lost its shelter. It was night before roads were made, or houses. It was the night that dwellers in caves had watched from some high place among the rocks.

Then the curtain rose. They spoke. (140)

Although the lighthouse occupies a central position in one of

Virginia Woolf's most successful novels, an analysis of its precursors and associated images will lend support to her theory of symbol as outlined in the Diary:

What interests me most in the last stage is the freedom and boldness with which my imagination picked up, used and tossed aside all images, symbols which I had prepared. I am sure that this is the right way of using them - not in set pieces as I had tried first, coherently, simply as images, never making them work out; only suggest. (101)

The image of the lighthouse as a compound of masculine and feminine principles, as an entity encompassing the duality of light and dark, day and night, beacon and sea, owes its success to a pattern of inextricably related images. The preoccupation exhibits the sort of enigmatic transference which should, perhaps, be associated with the true symbol. Carl Woodring concludes that for "the androgynous artist a symbol must not be confined by reason. The successfully symbolic partakes of the multiplicity of the real."⁸ We are immediately reminded of James's cautionary statement in To the Lighthouse, that "nothing was simply one thing" (211). Therefore, at times Virginia Woolf seems concerned with equating the light with masculine, rational values; at times the emphasis shifts to what might be called feminine beams from lighted drawing-room windows, which in turn pierce the darkness of a city street; at times there is simply a searchlight lighting up the darkness of the night sky.

In The Voyage Out, the light symbol corresponds to the initial stage of the author's developmental use of images as outlined above, in that it is "prepared" or "planted". Its spokesmen are those incarnations of the English colonial spirit, Richard and Clarissa Dalloway, who, secure in their superiority, see it as the symbol of Empire. "Think of the light burning over the House, Dick! When I stood on deck just now I

seemed to see it. It's what one means by London" (47). The following associations of Richard Dalloway's vision of King, Prime Minister, and Law compel us to see the light as an expression of Victorian masculinity. A little later Richard approvingly comments on Helen Ambrose's reading: "It's the philosophers, it's the scholars ... they're the people who pass the torch, who keep the light burning by which we live" (71). It follows, therefore, that the great seats of learning, those dual ramparts of the patriarchy, Oxford and Cambridge, can also aspire to lighthouse stature. Indeed, as we can see from Jacob's Room, Cambridge emanates a radiance which is significantly lacking at Newnham:

They say the sky is the same everywhere But above Cambridge - anyhow above the roof of King's College Chapel - there is a difference. Out at sea a great city will cast a brightness into the night. Is it fanciful to suppose the sky, washed into the crevices of King's College Chapel, lighter, thinner, more sparkling than the sky elsewhere? Does Cambridge burn not only into the night, but into the day? (28-29)

The implied contrast is made concrete in the relative achievements of Erasmus Cowan, and his counterpart as lecturer in Classics, Miss Umphelby. The patriarch, "holding up in his smug little mirror the image of Virgil, all rayed round with good stories of the dons of Trinity and red beams of port " (39), is the complete picture of the strict, masculine, academic tradition. However, when Miss Umphelby lectures on Virgil, she sings him melodiously enough, accurately too, [but] she is always brought up by this question 'But if I met him, what should I wear?' - and then ... she lets her fancy play upon other details of man's meeting with woman Her lectures, therefore, are not half so well attended as those of Cowan, and the thing she might have said in elucidation of the text for ever left out. (39)

The feminine propensities for personal relations and a concern for the inner life alienate her from the demands of strict academe. "In short, face a teacher with the image of the taught and the mirror breaks" (39). If there is an inadequacy on Miss Umphelby's part, it is that of

ignoring rigid structures and frames of reference. But Cowan, in his exaltation of pure mechanics, is equally at fault. He is "the builder, assessor, surveyor, rather, ruling lines between names, hanging lists above doors" (39).

The solution to the problem lies in a combination of the lecturer's individual talents. He simply provides a "fabric through which the light must shine" (39). On their own, masculine sub-structure or (in this case) feminine light represent only a partial view of reality. Still, in this novel, the fleeting nature of the duality proposed has not asserted itself, and we remember particularly the masculine platitude of the 'light of learning'. "If any light burns above Cambridge, it must be from the sick rooms; Greek burns here, science there; philosophy on the ground floor" (36-37). The same idea persists, in The Years, in the imagery associated with that Oxford scholar of Greek, Edward Pargiter. "When the lamp was turned higher he saw his work cut out in a sharp circle of bright light from the surrounding dimness" (41). Oxford must also be given the chance to play its part.

In each of these instances we can see the daughter of Leslie Stephen paying homage to the values of courage, intellect, order, continuity, and rationalism which she associated with her father. The reverence is apparent (if a little ironically evoked) in an observation in A Room of One's Own, when the feminist envisages "Mr. Kipling's officers who turn their backs; and his Sowers who sow the Seed; and his Men who are alone with their Work; and the Flag - one blushes at all these capital letters as if one had been caught eavesdropping at some purely masculine orgy." (101) In Night and Day similar achievements in

civilization and erudition are symbolized in Katharine Hilbery's drawing her line of succession from the famous poet, Allardyce. Her masculine love of mathematics and astronomy must be approached on hereditary grounds. Her ancestors "had been conspicuous judges and admirals, lawyers and servants of the State ... and when they were not lighthouses firmly based on rock for the guidance of their generation, they were steady, serviceable candles, illuminating the ordinary chambers of daily life" (32).

Virginia Woolf's comments in an essay on the Memoirs of Laetitia Pilkington, the midget confidante of Swift, are relevant to one of the author's ubiquitous journeys which takes place in Orlando. "Memories of great men are no infallible specific," she had observed. "They fall upon the race of life like beams from a lighthouse. They flash, they shock, they reveal, they vanish."⁹ After Pope has outshone the wits at a literary gathering in the eighteenth century, he and Orlando share a coach ride where the spaced lamplights punctuate her alternating feelings of approbation and criticism for her companion. Finally, when they reach a bigger lamp post, at what is now Piccadilly Circus, "The light blazed in her eyes, and she saw, besides some degraded creatures of her own sex, two wretched pygmies on a stark desert island" (145). As the intensity of the light increases she deplores their shared vanity - "for you to think you can protect me, or for me to think I can worship you The light of truth is damnably unbecoming to us both" (145). The "light of genius" which constantly illumined in the earlier novels is here diminished to a type of pulsation associated with the lighthouse. From the foregoing passage, however, it must not be supposed that genius ... is constantly alight, for then we should see everything plain and perhaps should be scorched to death in the process. Rather, it resembles

the lighthouse in its working, which sends one ray and no more for a time (146)

To the Lighthouse sees Mr. Ramsay pondering the impermanence of earthly genius. "His own little light would shine, not very brightly, for a year or two, and would then be merged in some bigger light, and that in a bigger still" (42). Further on, Mr. Ramsay significantly compares his genius with that of Shakespeare, the androgynous symbol. "Not knowing precisely why it was he wanted to disparage Shakespeare and come to the rescue of the man who stands eternally in the door of the lift [of the Tube]", he finds himself on his little ledge "facing the dark of human ignorance ..." (51-52). In Mr. Ramsay, the symbol of the human intellect, the great mind has assumed candle proportions.

In Night and Day, Ralph Denham's love for Katharine propels him one night into the street, and he gazes up at her three drawing-room windows. He has been just previously frustrated in his attempts to communicate with an old vagrant, and in this disturbing state of rudderlessness

an odd image came to his mind of a lighthouse besieged by the flying bodies of lost birds, who were dashed senseless, by the gale against the glass. He had a strange sensation that he was both lighthouse and bird; he was steadfast and brilliant; and at the same time he was whirled, with all other things senseless against the glass. (365)

He feels himself impelled magnetically to Katharine's house, to Katharine, his own personal lighthouse:

He did not see her in the body; he seemed curiously to see her as a shape of light, the light itself; he seemed, simplified and exhausted as he was, to be like one of those lost birds fascinated by the lighthouse and held to the glass by the splendour of the blaze. (366)

As events proceed he is able to go beyond this partial vision to that concept of the lighthouse as true and viable symbol of androgyny which we will see it assume in To the Lighthouse. The unrequited William Rodney

becomes that senseless bird, while Ralph and Katharine "were alone together, aloft, splendid, and luminous with a twofold radiance" (368). Connections with both A Room of One's Own and Orlando are suggested. At this point Ralph's mind is truly androgynous - in the words of A Room of One's Own, "incandescent, unimpeded" (58). The vision also calms the turbulence of personal animosities. At a temporary halt under a lamp post, Ralph Denham and William Rodney "seemed to be aware of some common knowledge which did away with the possibility of rivalry" (370).

In both The Years and the short story, "The Searchlight", union of the male and female within the beams of a searchlight is similarly suggested. In the 1917 section of the former, though Eleanor is declining into confirmed spinsterhood, her thoughts rove over the happiness of the marriage of Maggie and Renny:

That is the man, she said to herself, with a sudden rush of conviction as she came out into the frosty air, that I should like to have married A broad fan of light, like the sail of a windmill, was sweeping slowly across the sky. It seemed to take what she was feeling and to express it broadly and simply, as if another voice were speaking in another language. Then the light stopped and examined a fleecy patch of sky, a suspected spot.

The raid! she said to herself. I'd forgotten the raid! She was surprised but it was true. (241)

Again this visionary moment is followed by a picture of "little figures ... hurrying along the pavement; they emerged for a moment under a lamp, then vanished into darkness again" (241). The element of fantasy pervades "The Searchlight" as Mrs. Ivimey, the narrator, recalls the circumstances surrounding the first meeting of her grandparents. Symbolically the man is alone in his solid fortress of rock, aimlessly exploring the surrounding moor through his telescope. Suddenly, the lens focusses on a man and woman kissing beside a cottage. Rather impulsively,

Mrs. Ivimey's grandfather traverses the moor to claim this woman who will become his wife. Telescope and searchlight are finally merged, as "A shaft of light fell upon Mrs. Ivimey as if someone had focussed the lens of a telescope upon her."¹⁰ In this way, the rays of the lighthouse bridge the space-time continuum and give an affirmation to Miss La Trobe's vision at the close of Between the Acts.

We have already seen that Virginia Woolf has invested the Ramsays with qualities that she believed to be representatively masculine and feminine. Emphasis has been placed on the complementary nature of these characteristics - Mrs. Ramsay's creative, intuitive femininity counterpointed by Mr. Ramsay's courageous, intellectual masculinity. It is essential, now, to measure Virginia Woolf's achievement of symbolic androgyny, to show that the lighthouse stands for both Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay. "Like the idea of the androgynous mind, the lighthouse combines opposing principles; it is both phallus and eye, at times, erect and stark, at others, misty, yielding."¹¹ To reverse the natural order somewhat, it may be as well to state at the outset the problem of reconciliation as seen by James in the concluding section of the novel:

The Lighthouse was then [in his childhood] a silvery, misty-looking tower with a yellow eye that opened suddenly and softly in the evening. Now -

James looked at the Lighthouse. He could see the white-washed rocks; the tower, stark and straight; he could see that it was barred with black and white; he could see windows in it; he could even see washing spread on the rocks to dry. So that was the Lighthouse, was it?

No, the other was also the Lighthouse. For nothing was simply one thing. The other was the Lighthouse too. (211)

The necessity for James's attainment of this double vision has already been stressed in the duality of Mrs. Ramsay's response to the lighthouse. True to character, Mrs. Ramsay's first view of the lighthouse is seen through her husband's eyes as "the hoary Lighthouse, distant,

austere, in the midst", rising out of "the great plateful of blue water ... before her" (16). However, Mrs. Ramsay's reaction to the lighthouse, immediately after she finishes reading the story of "The Fisherman's Wife" to young James, is curiously ambivalent. The paradox of the lighthouse as the androgynous composite of light and dark finds partial expression in her initial desire "to be alone. All the being and the doing, expansive, glittering, vocal, evaporated; and one shrunk, with a sense of solemnity, to being oneself, a wedge-shaped core of darkness, something invisible to others" (72). This soft and shrouded core of being, reminiscent of the living centre of the snail in "The Mark on the Wall", allows her unnoticed passage into the lives of others. But the powers of darkness and the powers of light must be merged in the artist who orders life as Mrs. Ramsay does:

Losing personality, one lost the fret, the hurry, the stir; and there rose to her lips always some exclamation of triumph over life when things came together in this peace, this rest, this eternity; and pausing there she looked out to meet that stroke of the Lighthouse, the long steady stroke, the last of the three which was her stroke Often she found herself sitting and looking, sitting and looking, with her work in her hands until she became the thing she looked at - that light for example. (73)

These pulses of light and dark correspond in essence to her personal vision of experience, as well as to that imbalance of her being where intuition presides over intellect. "With her mind she had always seized the fact that there is no reason, order, justice; but suffering death, the poor" (74). But Mrs. Ramsay is the spirit of life itself, the inner light whose essential energy overcomes the tyranny of an illogical world and produces, if not everlasting happiness, at least 'the moment':

With some irony in her interrogation ... she looked at the steady light, the pitiless, the remorseless, which was so much her, yet so little her ... but for all that she thought, watching it with fascination, hypnotized, as if it were stroking with its silver fingers some sealed vessel in her brain

whose bursting would flood her with delight, she had known happiness, exquisite happiness, intense happiness, and it silvered the rough waves a little more brightly, as daylight faded, and the blue went out of the sea and it rolled in waves of pure lemon which curved and swelled and broke upon the beach and the ecstasy burst in her eyes and the waves of pure delight raced over the floor of her mind and she felt, It is enough! It is enough! (75-76)

Thus, as Mrs. Ramsay's personal symbol, the lighthouse signifies her ability to create a unity and harmony of the type she achieves at her dinner party. The quintessential mother wards off collision on the reefs of human misunderstanding.

Mrs. Ramsay's own feelings of personal inadequacy should be sufficient warning for us that the lighthouse is not to be identified with her alone. The truth of the inner life is her particular province, but Mr. Ramsay's intellect, which she venerates, shelters her from the attacks of external chaos and irrationality. As she sits searching for a picture that James might like to cut out, the low growl of masculine conversation stifles for a time the relentless surge of the waves on the beach. Without this protection, she admits to the feeling that "a ghostly roll of drums remorselessly beat the measure of life, made one think of the destruction of the island and its engulfment in the sea ..." (19-20). Without the buffer provided by the discussion outside "the other sounds suddenly thundered hollow in her ears and made her look up with an impulse of terror" (20). Later, at the dinner, Mr. Ramsay's conversation again enables her to feel a release: "... she let it uphold her and sustain her, this admirable fabric of the masculine intelligence, which ran up and down, crossed this way and that, like iron girders spanning the swaying fabric, upholding the world ..." (122).

The lie is given to the frequently voiced opinion that Mr. Ramsay

is totally dependent on his wife in the following passage (where the emphasised sections evoke the image of the lighthouse):

It was his fate, his peculiarity, whether he wished it or not, to come out thus onto this spit of land which the sea is slowly eating away, and there to stand like a desolate sea-bird, alone. It was his power, his gift, suddenly to shed all superfluities, to shrink and diminish so that he looked barer and felt sparer, even physically, yet lost none of his intensity of mind, and so to stand on his little ledge facing the dark of human ignorance, how we know nothing and the sea eats away the ground we stand on - that was his fate, his gift. But having thrown away ... all gestures and fripperies, all trophies of nuts and roses, and shrunk so that not only fame but even his own name was forgotten by him, he kept even in that desolation a vigilance, which spared no phantom and luxuriated in no vision, and it was in this guise that he inspired ... in his wife ... profound reverence, and pity, and gratitude too, as a stake driven into the bed of a channel upon which the gulls perch and the waves beat inspires in merry boat-loads a feeling of gratitude for the duty it has taken upon itself of marking the channel out there in the floods alone. (51-52) [Emphasis added].

Moreover, in both physique and philosophy, Mr. Ramsay suggests the solid and upright structure, without which foundation the light could not exist. He is described variously as "lean as a knife, narrow as a blade of one"; as a "beak of brass barren and bare"; as "the arid scimitar of the male" - essentially "very straight and tall" (44-45). His philosophical speculations concern "Subject and object and the nature of reality" (28), and he is known to Lily Briscoe in terms of the images of the scrubbed kitchen table and the pear tree (29-30). This search for uncoloured fundamentals suggests the lighthouse as James has already described it in the daytime - "stark and straight glaring black and white" (230). Again, the admirable fabric of Mr. Ramsay's intellect, when he is confronted with a problem of great complexity, results in his assertion that "he would not die lying down; he would find some crag of rock, and there, his eyes fixed on the storm, trying to the end to pierce the darkness, he would die standing" (241).

The two parallel movements in the novel's concluding section - the approach of Mr. Ramsay and his children to the lighthouse, and the clarification of Lily's aesthetic problem with regard to her painting - must now be considered as complementary journeys into the androgynous state. The assumption is that James, Cam (and even Mr. Ramsay) are involved in a symbolic voyage which will lead to a synthesis of the male and female elements of personality. Also, Lily will reach artistic maturity, will complete her painting, only when she attains a similar synthesis.

There are two levels of conflict in the boat - an alliance between the children against the father, as well as the omnipresent masculine-feminine polarity. Mr. Ramsay, the reincarnated champion of Empire, Mr. Dalloway, summons his troops, Cam and James, to complete the journey begun ten years earlier. Partially, at least for Mr. Ramsay, the journey constitutes the "rites he went through for his own pleasure in memory of dead people ..." (187). But Mrs. Ramsay is also present in the boat to the extent that James and Cam are allied in their continuing attempts to resist their father's masculine tyranny. Before boarding they had vowed "in silence as they walked, to stand by each other and carry out the great compact - to resist tyranny to the death" (185). Cam is the first to weaken slightly. As the boat gathers speed she "looked down into the foam, into the sea with all its treasure in it, and its speed hypnotised her, and the tie between her and James sagged a little. It slackened a little" (188). But this is only a brief reconciliation, as Mr. Ramsay deplores his daughter's female inadequacy in the face of facts. Cam is no more adept with a compass than Mrs. Ramsay was with the square root of 1253. Meanwhile, James continues to echo Virginia Woolf's

attacks on the patriarchy. "Whatever he did ... he would fight ... he would track down and stamp out - tyranny, despotism, he called it - making people do what they did not want to do, cutting off their right to speak" (209). His sister is equally virulent as she recalls "the crass blindness and tyranny" of her father "which had poisoned her childhood and raised bitter storms, so that even now she woke in the night trembling with rage and remembered some command of his; some insolence: 'Do this', 'Do that', his dominance: his 'Submit to me'" (193). Like her mother, however, Cam derives an inexplicable calming of spirit through the presence of her father in the boat. As a child she had found the paternally dominated library a haven of safety; so now, in the boat, she projects herself into strange and daring adventures.

For the moment, James is adamant and implacable as he identifies with the suffering of his mother, that fountain of truth already referred to:

She alone spoke the truth; to her alone could he speak it. That was the source of her everlasting attraction for him, perhaps; she was a person to whom one could say what came into one's head. But all the time he thought of her, he was conscious of his father following his thought, shadowing it, making it shiver and falter. (212-213)

Substance seems to be given to Mrs. Ramsay's earlier admonition that "children don't forget" (73) as Cam's daydreams take her back to the nursery. James similarly rekindles earlier thoughts of parricide. "He had always kept this old symbol of taking a knife and striking his father to the heart" (209).

Insidiously, as they near the lighthouse, and the pace of the boat quickens, their attitudes change. The first close view of the lighthouse begins to reconcile James: "... it was a stark tower on a bare rock. It satisfied him. It confirmed some obscure feeling of his

about his own character" (231). James is ready to enter manhood by identifying himself with his father's attitude of grim and solitary awareness of the implacable reality. "He looked at his father reading fiercely with his legs curled tight. They shared that knowledge. 'We are driving before a gale - we must sink,' he began saying to himself, half aloud exactly as his father said it" (231). He is echoing his father's repetition of the line from Cowper's "Castaway" - "We perished each alone". James's supreme moment, his coming into selfhood, occurs when his father, after making "some mathematical calculation", praises his son for his steermanship. "There! Cam thought, addressing herself silently to James. You've got it at last ... he was so pleased that he would not look at her or at his father or at anyone" (234). Mrs. Ramsay's erstwhile champion has corrected his former feminine imbalance by earning masculine approbation, by attaining that measure of virility symbolised by achieving the lighthouse. Cam may also be accorded admission to her androgynous heritage by her dual vision of both sea and island:

The sea was more important now than the shore. Waves were all round them, tossing and sinking, with a log wallowing down one wave; and a gull riding on another. About here, she thought, dabbling her fingers in the water, a ship had sunk, and she murmured, dreamily, half asleep, how we perished, each alone. (217)

Cam reaches feminine maturity at the very moment that she unconsciously echoes the words of her father.

The change in Mr. Ramsay is no less marked. "He rose and stood in the bow of the boat, very straight and tall, for all the world, James thought, as if he were saying, 'There is no God', and Cam thought, as if he were leaping into space, and they both rose to follow him as he sprang, lightly like a young man on to the rock" (236). This triumphant assertion

of agnosticism recalls Mrs. Ramsay's denial of the involuntary assertion, 'We are in the hands of the Lord' (74), which immediately preceded her moment of fusion. Mr. Ramsay breaks free of the masculine apotheosis of intellect, and thus unfettered, is transformed and free in his movements. This achievement may lay to rest the ghost of the Bergsonian theory that one can never pass from intellect to intuition, and it certainly upholds the view of critics who disclaim any vital connection between Bergson and Mrs. Woolf.¹²

The conflicts and reconciliations we have just been discussing have been most admirably summarised by Daiches:

The lighthouse itself, standing lonely in the midst of the sea, is the symbol of the individual who is at once a unique being and a part of the flux of history. To reach the lighthouse is, in a sense, to make contact with a truth outside oneself, to surrender the uniqueness of one's ego to an impersonal reality. Mr. Ramsay who is an egotist constantly seeking applause and encouragement from others, resents his young son's enthusiasm for visiting the lighthouse, and only years later, when his wife has died and his own life is almost worn out, does he win this freedom from self - and it is significant that Virginia Woolf makes Mr. Ramsay escape his egotistic preoccupations for the first time just before the boat finally reaches the lighthouse. Indeed, the personal grudges nourished by each of the characters fall away just as they arrive.¹³

In her discussion of Virginia Woolf's imagery, Irene Simon reaches essentially the same conclusion. She sees the journey to the lighthouse as preparing "the way for the meeting with otherness, with the not-self, and which leads to a kind of identification with this Other. The wording seems to suggest some kind of mystical experience, breaking the limitations of self and giving a sense of oneness."¹⁴ However, in its function as the Other, the not-self, the lighthouse preserves its duality as masculine substructure which hangs aloft the feminine light of intuition.

We must now show that Lily Briscoe aspires to the androgynous mind of the artist, that her painting is a formal expression of the combination

of intellect with intuition, of order with the flux of experience:

Beautiful and bright it should be on the surface, feathery and evanescent, one colour melting into another, like the colours on a butterfly's wing; but beneath the fabric must be clamped together with bolts of iron. It was to be a thing you could ruffle with your breath; and a thing you could not dislodge with a team of horses. (194)

Mrs. Ramsay's identification of the masculine intelligence with "iron girders spanning the swaying fabric, upholding the world" has already been noticed. Lily, also, has prompted an identification of these opposed principles of masculinity and femininity when she "saw the colour burning on a framework of steel; the light of a butterfly's wing lying upon the arches of a cathedral" (56-57).

As a basis for further discussion we could note a distinct movement from Lily's early dominant masculinity, through a growing awareness of her femininity, to the requisite synthesis as she completes her painting. Her reminiscences about Mrs. Ramsay's acts of charity argue a veneration of intellect:

It was her instinct [Mrs. Ramsay's] to go, an instinct like the swallows for the south ... turning her infallibly to the human race, making her nest in its heart. And this like all instincts was a little distressing to people who did not share it; to Mr. Carmichael perhaps, to herself certainly. Some notion was in both of them about the ineffectiveness of action, the supremacy of thought. (187)

With her little Chinese eyes, her pale puckered-up face, Lily would never marry. She actively resists Mrs. Ramsay's attempts at matchmaking, but still feels that her own achievements and possessions, her father, her home, her painting, are "so little, so virginal, against the other" (58). Any relationship with males would have to be purely platonic, because her relations with the opposite sex are distinctively neutral. She virtually forces herself to pander to Mr. Tansley's damaged ego, noticing the while that Mrs. Ramsay "pitied men always as if they lacked

something - women never, as if they had something." (98). It is surely significant that, at that very moment, Mrs. Ramsay is pitying Lily whose isolation compares so unfavourably with Minta's happiness. However, the war provides the first dents in her masculine armour - "the war had drawn the sting of her femininity. Poor devils one thought, of both sexes" (181). She comes closer to a resolution of her aesthetic problem when she attains Mrs. Ramsay's ability "to rest in silence, uncommunicative, to rest in the extreme obscurity of human relations" (189).

The central technical problem in Lily's painting is the disposition of light and shade, a mirror of both the novel's internal structuring in which the glow of window and lighthouse encircles the dark of 'Time Passes', and the alternation of light and darkness which is the essential effect of the lighthouse. "The question being one of the relations of masses, of lights and shadows, which, to be honest he [Mr. Bankes] had never considered before, he would like to have it explained - what then did she wish to make of it?" (62) Lily's response to this query had identified a "triangular purple shape" as Mrs. Ramsay reading to James, which must recall the "wedge of darkness", symbol of Mrs. Ramsay's essential being. This representation of mother and child set in the window against the wall of the house was one mass. The other, perhaps, was the hedge with the red hot poker flanking it and enclosing a perspective view of the sea and the lighthouse. Between these two masses was a tree:

It was a question, she remembered, how to connect this mass on the right hand with that on the left. She might do it by bringing the line of the branch across so; or break the vacancy in the foreground by an object (James perhaps) so. (62)

Lily's problem of aesthetic connection is paralleled on the personal plane.

At this point in the novel she finds herself undefined between Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay, between the masculine and feminine principles. Her superior mood at the dinner provides her with a temporary solution. "Yes I shall put the tree further in the middle; then I shall avoid that awkward space" (98). But this is a rational manoeuvre suggesting that design can take absolute precedence over vision.

As she settles again to her painting, in the final section, she has to acknowledge the frustrating influence of Mr. Ramsay. Up to now he has been completely external to her design, but now the success of her painting is mysteriously connected with his voyage to the lighthouse. Inexplicably, almost against her will, she finds herself praising his boots, at least partially overcoming that longstanding inability of hers to offer feminine sympathy. But this is only a short-lived victory for her femininity. She keeps her artist-spinster status intact, "and he [Mr. Ramsay] was like a lion seeking whom he could devour, and his face had that touch of desperation, of exaggeration in it which alarmed her, and made her pull her skirts about her" (177). Still Lily is unable to settle to her work and draw that reconciliation for which she has searched. She finds herself quite clearly placed in the void between Mr. Ramsay and the painting, a situation analogous to the position of Mr. Ramsay's boat between island and lighthouse:

For whatever reason she could not achieve that razor edge of balance between two opposite forces; Mr. Ramsay and the picture; which was necessary. There was something perhaps wrong with the design? Was it, she wondered, that the line of the wall wanted breaking, was it that the mass of the trees was too heavy? She smiled ironically; for had she not thought, when she began, that she had solved her problem? (219)

Lily is slowly moving to the conclusion that a solution to her artistic problems will involve the meaning and perspectives of both Mr.

and Mrs. Ramsay. Any form of exclusion would be anathema to this totally committed artist whose work incorporated "the residue of her thirty-three years, the deposit of each day's living, mixed with something more secret than she had ever spoken or shown ..." (61). What then of her momentary assertion of independence from Mrs. Ramsay? "Yes; she realized that the drawing room step was empty, but it had no effect on her whatever. She did not want Mrs. Ramsay now" (222). The speciousness of this stand is quickly underlined as a vision of Mrs. Ramsay prompts Lily to call out to her, "feeling the old horror come back - to want and want and not to have" (229). One critical opinion states that "Lily's increased femininity accounts for her seeing Mrs. Ramsay, for this vision represents a glimpse of eternity which hitherto in the novel has been realized only by Mrs. Ramsay's feminine intuition."¹⁵ But one must hasten to add, as Lily does, an equally potent need for Mr. Ramsay: "... Lily went past Mr. Carmichael holding her brush to the edge of the lawn. Where was that boat now? Mr. Ramsay? She wanted him" (230).

Within this total context of duality of identification the significance of the line that Lily draws on her canvas can now be determined. The androgynous artist comes to accept the epicene base of her own personality. There are distinctly sexual connotations in the images which Virginia Woolf uses to describe Lily at work on her painting: "the mass loomed before her: it protruded"; "Then, as if some juice necessary for the lubrication of her faculties were spontaneously squirted"; "her hand quivered with life"; and "it [her brush] was now heavier and went slower, as if it had fallen in with some rhythm" (181). One might even think of fertility rites for the mind, reminiscent of the credo stated in A Room of One's Own:

... in each of us two powers preside, one male, one female The normal comfortable state of being is that when the two live in harmony together, spiritually cooperating If one is a man still the woman part of the brain must have effect; and a woman must also have intercourse with the man in her. Coleridge probably meant this when he said that a great mind is androgynous. (97)

Lily's sudden, intense line down the centre postulates a balance as symbolic as that of the lighthouse itself. She has had her vision ensured by a detachment no less complete than Mrs. Ramsay's. "As she lost consciousness of outer things ... her mind kept throwing up from its depths, scenes, and names, and sayings, and memories and ideas, like a fountain spurting over that glaring, hideously difficult white space, while she modelled it with greens and blues" (181). Lily's final brush stroke is, of course, contemporaneous with Mr. Ramsay's setting foot on the lighthouse. By accepting her opposite she achieves a reconciliation of the masculine and feminine elements of her own personality. "Whatever she had wanted to give him ... she had given him at last" (236). Both Ramsays are now incorporated in the painting, no less than they were joined in the lighthouse, as a fusion of light and dark, tree and hedge, existing through the potency of the line in harmonious relation.

CHAPTER IV

THE WAVES AND THE ANDROGYNOUS ARTIST

As a mature expression of technique, analogous to Joyce's Finnegans Wake, The Waves represents a climactic in Virginia Woolf's literary output. More significantly, this novel, through the medium of Bernard as composite of the other six selves, provides the author's most penetrating analysis of the nature of life and the artistic process. The Waves is the ultimate statement of Virginia Woolf's belief that the mind of the androgynous artist must combine masculine and feminine elements in a marriage so closely fused that there is no consciousness within the writer of being either man or woman. The discussion of the Russian novelists in A Room of One's Own comes closest to a postulate of this artistic credo. War and Peace can survive in the face of "all sorts of antagonistic and opposed emotions", when "Life conflicts with something that is not life", because in such "rare instances of survival ... is something that one calls integrity What one means by integrity, in the case of the novelist, is the conviction that he gives one that this is the truth" (72). Virginia Woolf goes on to assert that Nature seems ... to have provided us with an inner light by which to judge of the novelist's integrity or disintegrity. Or perhaps it is rather that Nature, in her most irrational mood, has traced in invisible ink on the walls of the mind a premonition which these great artists confirm ... one exclaims in rapture, But this is what I have always felt and known and desired! (72-73)

In its preoccupation with the inner workings of the artistic

consciousness The Waves provides Virginia Woolf's most comprehensive expression of this "inner light". We have seen Lily Briscoe and Miss La Trobe achieve communication of this idea on a more representational plane. Bernard, as amalgam of the other selves, in his capacity as writer and phrase maker, comes closest to achieving that integration of personality which is the subject of this thesis. As Ramsay notes:

If the problem of subject and object, the interplay of character and environment, is never met in Virginia Woolf's criticism, the characters in her novels are lyric fractions, intense divisions of her own poetic consciousness rather than independent novelistic characters.¹

This estimate of The Waves in its equivalence of characterization to a form of fractional notation can be employed as a useful critical base. The characters in The Waves do illustrate the extremes and medians of solitude and companionship, which, when properly combined, will produce the androgynous mind of the artist. Thus, with the exception of Bernard, the characters exist on the level of symbol or abstract, as restricted and singular aspects of personality.

"The authentics, like Louis , like Rhoda exist most completely in solitude. They resent illumination, reduplication. They toss their pictures once painted face downward on the field" (99). Louis and Rhoda, then, are the male and female fractions of the mind which demand isolation, resisting all contact with the minds of others. Bernard, Neville, Susan, and Jinny evince in varying degrees a desire for communion with others. Between the extremes of nymphomania and homosexuality, represented by Jinny and Neville, are found the fecundity of Susan and the vital affirmations of Bernard, the novelist, who perceives in images, seeking a literal construct of what Susan affirms in life. Percival is the reality beyond self, the elusive societal ideal which the other six

quest for. The community of feeling established at Percival's farewell dinner is the only tangible evidence of a merging, which is finally disintegrated when he leaves them for India, and dies from injuries sustained in a riding accident. The spokesman, Bernard, attests to their separate fractional existences, and the difficulties of a mind not truly androgynous in these terms:

We saw for a moment laid out among us the body of the complete human being whom we have failed to be, but at the same time, cannot forget. All that we might have been we saw; all that we had missed, and we grudged for a moment the other's claim, as children when the cake is cut, the one cake, the only cake, watch their slice diminishing. (238)

Rhoda is Virginia Woolf's statement of the creative, intuitive artist, embodying a species of neurosis which resists all contact with external reality. Impotent in the face of life's impingements, she regards it as an "emerging monster", a state made concrete by her repetitive images of the springing tiger, and her recurrent statement "I have no face" (27). "The door opens," Rhoda complains, "and the tiger leaps I am afraid of the shock of sensation that leaps upon me, because I cannot deal with it as you do" (90). Her dilemma finds expression in the need for the contemplative mind to particularize, even at the expense of self-destruction. As Peter and Margaret Havard-Williams see the problem:

... Rhoda's malady springs from just this kind of sensation: her consciousness is arrested, her mind lodges in the objects she perceives She cannot adopt an attitude to external phenomena, particularly to people, nor can she harmonise the relationship of her mind and body; she lives entirely the life of the spirit and finds the experience of the senses rude and painful.²

Judgments of this type prompt an immediate connection between Rhoda and one well documented aspect of her author's creative process. The highly charged emotional states that Virginia Woolf associates with her

recurring nervous breakdowns, her subjection to physical illness, acute influenza, and migraines result in a species of mysticism which she describes in her Diary:

Something happens in my mind. It refuses to go on registering impressions. It shuts itself up. It becomes chrysalis. I lie quite torpid, often with acute physical pain Then suddenly something springs ... ideas rush in me; often though this is before I can control my mind or pen. (153-154)

Rhoda, then, needs the assurance of touching something hard, something concrete in the world of solid objects. With her toes pressed hard against the unyielding iron rail of her bed she avoids immurement in dream:

Out of me now my mind can pour. I can think of my Armadas sailing on the high waves. I am relieved of hard contacts and collisions. I sail on alone under white cliffs. Oh, but I sink, I fall! That is the corner of the cupboard; that is the nursery looking-glass. But they stretch, they elongate Oh, to awake from dreaming! Look, there is the chest of drawers. Let me pull myself out of these waters. (22-23)

On a subsequent occasion, the pressure of her hand "against the hard door of a Spanish inn" (177) rescues her at the last from an overwhelming desire for immersion in the infinity of sea and sky.

As the feminine, intuitionist fraction, Rhoda's quest for spiritual and aesthetic reality leads her into a world of fantasy in which lie the seeds of her own downfall. "I am stretched," she says, "among these long lights, these long waves, these endless paths, with people pursuing, pursuing" (23). Her visionary world is inhabited by darting swallows who dip their wings; by ships that pass majestically over the seas; by waves that dash themselves into foam over the circumference of the earth. Whether borne along on the back of a jogging mule or carried aloft on wind or wave, Rhoda allows her imagination to suspend her being, unimpeded by any effort of will or intellect:

Rhoda, who flies past with her neck outstretched as wild geese fly at nightfall straining forward into the darkness, is the symbol of the artist longing to escape into a blind world of dreams, fleeing from the immense effort of ordering her vision to reality and reality to her vision.³

Rhoda's function, then, is quite clear. She represents the mind's natural wish for solitude, a necessary state for artistic contemplation.

Virginia Woolf employs the sea and music as objective correlatives for the purely aesthetic reality which Rhoda achieves on the levels of intuition and association. She is like "the foam that sweeps and fills the uttermost rims of the rock with whiteness" (92), mistress of nothing but her dreams. After Percival's death she offers music as possibly the only integrating aesthetic, recalling the acknowledgement of the failure of the pageant in Between the Acts:

"Like" and "like" and "like" - but what is the thing that lies beneath the semblance of the thing? Now that lightning has gashed the tree and the flowering branch has fallen and Percival, by his death, has made me this gift, let me see the thing. There is a square; there is an oblong. The players take the square and place it upon the oblong. They place it very accurately; they make a perfect dwelling-place. Very little is left outside. The structure is now visible; what is inchoate is here stated; we are not so various or so mean; we have made oblongs and stood them upon squares. This is our triumph; this is our consolation.' (139)

Here Virginia Woolf explicitly states Rhoda's inadequate belief that a mathematical balance asserts acceptance of life. Rhoda's vision remains only an abstract guarantee of order and achievement. Suicide follows inevitably, as soon as Rhoda realizes that the achievement of artistic form carries with it no guaranteed application to life as it is individually lived. We return to the temptation, with all its ominous overtones, of equating Rhoda and her creator.

Louis, as Rhoda's masculine counterpart, employs rational, rather than intuitive, methods of ordering reality. His alienation is on one level social - his father is a banker in Brisbane, and his Australian

accent makes him conspicuous in the Public School environment. Thus, being denied identification, he aspires to a mercantile supremacy hardly compatible with an equally potent desire to immerse himself in poetry. He invokes a compensatory destiny for himself which is expressed in terms of three dominant images:

I hold a stalk in my hand. I am the stalk. My roots go down to the depths of the world, through earth dry with brick, and damp earth, through veins of lead and silver. I am all fibre. All tremors shake me, and the weight of the earth is pressed to my ribs. Up here my eyes are green leaves, unseeing. (9)

In this physical identification with the earth, specifically with the groping and encircling roots, the basis is laid for Louis's later attempts to impose his sense of order on the others. He not only echoes Lucy Swithin's readings in pre-history, but asserts companionship with Virgil and Plato, and even a connection with ancient Egypt. "Every day I unbury - I dig up. I find relics of myself in the sand that women made thousands of years ago, when I heard songs by the Nile and the chained beast stamping" (109). In these final two images Louis places himself as one of Bernard's "inheritors". Although he is the objectification of the Jungian unconscious, Louis stamps in defiance against the bitterness of reality, resolved to break his fetters. He summons all the resources of his will "to fix in words, to forge ... a ring of steel" (33), to exemplify a paradoxical response to Percival. While deploring Bernard's penchant for story-telling, Louis is still jealous of the writer's power. In a similar way he resents the influence of Percival over the others, while at the same time acknowledging a need for Percival as a vital source of inspiration.

"My shoulder is to the wheel; I roll the dark before me, spreading commerce where there was chaos in the far parts of the world" (143).

Louis's economic patterning, as he laces the world with ships, is as artificial and external an ordering of reality as Rhoda's oblongs placed upon squares. His statement of an achievement fulfilled, of a "destiny ... that ... must plait into one cable the many threads, the thin, the thick, the broken, the enduring of our long history, of our tumultuous and varied day" (173), is no more than an empty boast. His mistress, Rhoda, departs and leaves him with the one poem on the page, and a vista of grimy suburban roofs.

As exponents of solitude, Louis and Rhoda, then, are caught in an impasse. They resent intrusion, yet yearn for communion, yearn to verbalize the inexpressible. At the reunion dinner Rhoda admits that they "are aware of downfalling ... forebode decay", that they are "conspirators, withdrawn together to lean over some cold urn ..." (120). Rhoda and Louis gravitate towards the particular as represented in the selves of Bernard, Neville, Susan, and Jinny, and achieve integration and peace only when distance ensures objectivity. But as Susan draws nearer, the threat of close personal relations recalls the old horror: "Their eyes burn like the eyes of animals brushing through leaves on the scent of the prey. The circle is destroyed. They are thrown asunder" (122). Louis and Rhoda will never come to a knowledge of self without acknowledging the reality of the existence of others. The same problem serves as an instructive base to the novels of Iris Murdoch, where an understanding of the credo of the Sartrean existentialist is postulated:

What is feared is history, real beings and real change, whatever is contingent, messy, boundless, infinitely particular and endlessly still to be explained; what is desired is the timeless non-discursive whole which has its significance completely contained in itself.⁴

Alone in their worlds of fantasy and philosophy, Rhoda and Louis can never

aspire to the "little language such as lovers use" (122).

Neville also demands privacy and an ordered life, with the balance swinging in the direction of a rigid intellectualism. He is, to state the matter plainly, the perverted measure of Bernard. In his capacity as writer he shares Louis's masculine veneration of will and intellect, yet he glories in a sensuality which he shares with Jinny. In images that recall Mr. Ramsay and Peter Walsh, Neville's clarity of intelligence and honesty of intellect are conveyed through his "scissor-cutting" (99) mind, an "astonishing fine rapier" (76). He is acutely aware of his own solitude, yet is haunted by a vision of completion that triumphs over the chaos of external reality. "Nobody guessed the need I had to offer my being to one god; and perish, and disappear. His mallet descended; the vision broke" (43). Neville is a thoroughly tragic figure as the objects of his homosexual search pass through his solitary room, leaving him to die a thousand deaths. The paradox finds concrete expression in the image implanted in the child's mind of the dead man and the apple tree:

He was found in the gutter. His blood gurgled down the gutter. His jowl was white as a dead codfish. I shall call this stricture, this rigidity, "death among the apple trees" for ever. There were the floating, pale-grey clouds; and the immitigable tree; the implacable tree with its greaved silver bark. The ripple of my life was unavailing. I was unable to pass by But we are doomed all of us by the apple trees, by the immitigable tree which we cannot pass. (20)

Life and death, communion and solitude, coexist, but Neville's imbalance allows him only occasional communication, and that not in depth. "I shall be a clinger to the outsides of worlds all my life," he admits. (40) The advance which Neville represents over Louis and Rhoda can be expressed in terms of his partial merging of the masculine and feminine elements of

the artist's mind. Under the influence of the isolate contemplatives, Louis and Rhoda, he returns to the solitude of his room, which becomes a symbolic haven against the encircling darkness. On other occasions, the gregarious selves, Jinny, Susan, and Bernard, force him into that world of personal relationships which provides the raw material of art.

Neville is also Virginia Woolf's most complete portrait of the failure of the homosexual artist. He demonstrates the futility of unrelieved intellectual analysis, when measured against the union of intellect and intuitional perception. The homosexual, committed as he is to the glorification of one sex, must ultimately hold a separatist view of reality. We have been stressing, of course, that the androgynous being is simultaneously aware of division and union, of infinite variation and oneness. The single, self-centred search of the homosexual precludes such a vision, and consequently hinders communication. The apple tree, solid and implacable, with its stiff silver leaves, is a perverted Neville; the willow tree, vital, deep-rooted, fruitfully showering its green leaves, is the androgynous Bernard.

Jinny quite blatantly subscribes to a religion of the flesh which rescues her from the whirlpool of isolate reality. A protean figure, she is totally committed to the sensation of the moment:

... when I move my head I ripple all down my narrow body; even my thin legs ripple like a stalk in the wind. I flicker ... I move, I dance I move like the leaf that moved in the hedge as a child and frightened me. I dance over these streaked, these impersonal, distempered walls with their yellow skirting as firelight dances over teapots. I catch fire even from women's cold eyes. (35)

The tread of deep pile carpet, the caress of silk upon her flesh, the complete yielding to the rhythms of the dance, the unspoken promise when eyes meet across a room - such is Jinny's milieu. "Our bodies communicate.

This is my calling. This is my world" (87). The golden arrows of sensation emanate like rays from a lantern casting a glow of completeness over others, calling to mind Clarissa Dalloway's "party consciousness". Again, the inheritor of Mrs. Ramsay's beauty, Jinny can indulge her passion for variation, substituting Neville's "one" for the many. Even with advancing age, and the moment of truth in the Tube, Jinny's life pattern has been so successfully established that she almost affirms indestructibility: "'Little animal that I am, sucking my flanks in and out with fear, I stand here, palpitating, trembling, But I will not be afraid. I will bring the whip down on my flanks'" (165). She is able to emerge into "the triumphant procession" of crowded Piccadilly and there occupy her established social position, for Jinny alone is peculiarly immune from questions about self. Mysticism occupies no part in her frame of experience. For her "there was no past, no future; merely the moment in its ring of light, and our bodies; and the inevitable climax, the ecstasy" (217). Although Neville's perversion can be seen as a symbol of his refusal to surrender selfhood, Jinny's promiscuity precludes the sharing and motherhood which immortalize Susan as a species of Magna Mater. Neville and Jinny represent variants on the tragedy of sex.

In her capacity as nature's archetypal self Susan is, in essence, elemental. Unlike Mrs. Ramsay, Susan is content with fertility, maternity, without ever attaining her predecessor's art of creating harmonious relationships:

The only sayings I understand are cries of love, hate, rage and pain I shall never have anything but natural happiness. It will almost content me I shall lie like a field bearing crops in rotation; in the summer heat will dance over me; in the winter I shall be cracked with the cold....

My children will carry me on; their teething, their crying, their going to school and coming back will be like the waves of the sea under me.
(112-113)

The connection of both Susan and Mrs. Ramsay with Percival is further underlined, in that all three are the raw material of poetry, yet never master its phrases. Bernard says that Susan "was born to be the adored of poets, since poets require safety; someone who sits sewing, who says, 'I hate, I love,' who ... has some quality ... which those who create poetry so particularly admire" (212-213). James Hafley objectifies Mrs. Ramsay's attainment of both physical and spiritual immortality in her ability to see others in herself rather than herself in others.⁵ This slight difference in philosophy gains expression in Susan's: "I do not want people, when I come in, to look up with admiration. I want to give, to be given, and solitude in which to unfold my possessions" (45). Thus, her inability to share, her refusal to be submerged in Neville's personality at the second Hampton Court meeting, must be viewed as the stand of the teeming primitive, rearing to protect her young, and refusing to compromise. Hers is "the bestial and beautiful passion of maternity" (113), and this commitment to the core, the essences of being, prohibits verbalization.

Although she is opposed to sophistication, blaming the Swiss finishing school for some traumatic scar, Susan is distinctly jealous of Jinny, the successful society woman. The matriarch is sometimes "sick of natural happiness ... sick of the body ... of my own craft, industry and cunning, of the unscrupulous ways of the mother who protects, who collects under her jealous eyes at one long table, her own children, always her own" (164). Such absolute commitment to primal concerns has closed the door to glittering social fulfilment, but she is still guaranteed eternal

expression in her offspring: "His eyes will see when mine are shut He will increase my possessions" (147). It can be seen that Susan's total commitment to the natural life represents a rather Pyrrhic victory over isolation. Just as Neville saw her as a disruptive influence to the collective identity of the dinner party, so Louis asserts her elemental savagery in disconcerting images:

To be loved by Susan would be to be impaled by a bird's sharp beak, to be nailed to a barnyard door. Yet there are moments when I could wish to be speared by a beak, to be nailed to a barnyard door, positively, once and for all. (102)

In *Susan*, Virginia Woolf explores the dangers inherent in the negation of self, where fecundity per se and life's reduction to the simplest emotional responses force the lover of Percival to reach out blindly for Bernard.

These five selves - Rhoda, Louis, Neville, Jinny, and Susan - in turn soliloquize, expressing fully the gradations from isolation to companionship, occasionally in conflict, occasionally in agreement. Bernard is essentially more complex, yet attains the wholeness that the others search for, and is correspondingly Virginia Woolf's most comprehensive portrait of the androgynous artist. Initially, his adopted role of "phrase maker" can be seen in terms of a protective envelope which allows a shadowy connection. "'But when we sit together, close,' said Bernard, 'we melt into each other with phrases. We are edged with mist. We make an unsubstantial territory'" (12). However, the committed poet and raconteur needs the presence of others; he is artistically impotent in solitude:

The truth is that I need the stimulus of other people. Alone, over my dead fire, I tend to see the thin places in my own stories. The real novelist, the perfectly simple human being, could go on, indefinitely, imagining. He would not integrate as I do. He would not have this

devastating sense of grey ashes in a burnt-out grate. Some blind flaps in my eyes. Everything becomes impervious. I cease to invent. (68)

It is for this reason that he is allowed the final summation. A composite of the other six, he synthesises their individual achievements in his ultimate affirmation in the face of death.

Moody states the advanced achievement of The Waves over To the Lighthouse and Mrs. Dalloway in terms of a maturity of vision not approached in the earlier works:

Thus in the novel as a whole, Percival, the blank ideal, is given an actual (and unheroic) realisation in and through Bernard's creative comprehension. The several lives are integrated in that poised vision which sees not perfection, but a creative acceptance of life on its own terms.⁶

However, as a prerequisite for a final statement of Bernard's equation with the androgynous novelistic ideal to which Virginia Woolf aspired, we hear him say:

... what I call "my life" it is not one life that I look back upon; I am not one person; I am many people; I do not altogether know who I am - Jinny, Susan, Neville, Rhoda, or Louis; or how to distinguish my life from theirs. (237)

And again:

For this is not one life; nor do I always know if I am man or woman, Bernard or Neville, Louis, Susan, Jinny or Rhoda - so strange is the contact of one with another. (242) [Emphasis added].

In his capacity as writer, Bernard's final defiance of death represents an androgynous victory which ensures his survival, thus destroying the myth of Death the leveller.

Neville admits the power of the story teller. "There is the story of the boot-boy, the story of the man with one eye, the story of the woman who sells winkles" (31). Yet he quickly affirms Bernard's deficiencies:

Yes, the appalling moment has come when Bernard's power fails him and

there is no longer any sequence and he sags and twiddles a bit of string and falls silent, gaping as if about to burst into tears. Among the tortures and devastations of life is this then - our friends are not able to finish their stories. (32)

In a situation where the analogy is perfectly clear, Bernard confronts "Mr. Trumble" on the train, searching for the achievement that Mr. Bennett ignored when sitting opposite Mrs. Brown. Just as Louis uses the wheel of commerce to hoist himself out of the void of history and Jinny's body flames in the dark, Bernard insists that Trumble's "eyes - wild, laughing, yet desperate - express something that we have not gauged" (58-59). Despite his avowed need for companionship, Bernard suggests that the best phrases are made in solitude, deploring for the moment the exactitude - we might call it materialism - that Neville and Louis possess. However, while a random conversation allows Bernard to create his travelling companion, to "furbish him up and make him concrete" (58), Neville concludes that Bernard's art is, in fact, marked by a species of objective detachment: "We are all phrases in Bernard's story, things he writes down in his note-book under A or B" (59).

Bernard constantly opposes any such simplification: "... it becomes clear that I am not one and simple, but complex and many. Bernard, in public, bubbles; in private, is secretive" (64). The most horrifying experience he can imagine would be an unanswered call to the fund of selves of which he is composed. At University he invests himself with the identities of successive literary figures - Byron, Tolstoy, Meredith - in order to render his complexity through their essences. However, these investitures are destructive of self and productive of isolation:

... I am emptied of ambition; I do not remember my special gifts or idio-

syncrasy, or the marks I bear on my person; eyes, nose or mouth. I am not, at this moment, myself.

Yet behold it returns. One cannot extinguish that persistent smell. It steals in through some crack in the structure - one's identity. I am not part of the street - no, I observe the street. One splits off, therefore. (98)

Thus his boasts of connection rest on unsound foundations. Constantly attempting to acknowledge the reality of others, he achieves only partial communion, because he lacks individual identity. "Veined as I am with iron, with silver and streaks of common mud, I cannot contract into the firm fist which those clench who do not depend upon stimulus" (115). Nevertheless, Bernard's constant passage from self to self allows him to speculate about the others, and results in his being the only character seen entirely from birth to death.

Significantly, it is Bernard who is allowed the vision of union which occurs at the farewell dinner for Percival, and at the first Hampton Court reunion. Moreover, the death of Percival is linked in time with the birth of his own son, opening the way for Virginia Woolf's most mature analysis of these twin realities. We have noticed that Rhoda's reaction to the death of Percival involved recourse to the integrating aesthetic of music, where the connection made between oblongs and squares must be regarded as mechanical, artificial at best. Bernard attempts a similar release: "I will walk I will go up these steps into the gallery and submit myself to the influence of minds like mine outside the sequence" (133). His experiences in the National Gallery promote a heightened consciousness of Percival within and out of time, but most significantly point to androgynous reserves in his own mind which will act as prerequisites to his climactic vision. The time is not yet right, so he undertakes to "bury it; let it breed, hidden in the

depths of my mind some day to fructify" (134). The very fact that Bernard turns in the end to his emotional confidante, Jinny, attests to his primary advantage over Rhoda. Unlike Lord Jim, he is totally prepared to immerse himself in the indestructible element, and exhibits the true artist's courageous confrontation to whatever life may bring. As Robert Collins notes, Percival "has represented continuity and purpose, while the isolate self represents chaos and change, fundamentally meaningless experience upon which order must be imposed."⁷ Bernard's ultimate artistic affirmation rests on the individual achievements of the other five, so that his attainment of Percival is truly integrative.

From Susan, Bernard learns the protective encirclement of nature which spreads "like a net folding one's limbs in its meshes" (230). She is the maternal self who complements Bernard's paternity, asserting the existence of "a dwelling place made from time immemorial after an hereditary pattern" (236). There exists also a "dwelling place" permeated by an "atmosphere of common sense and tobacco" (232), where the pageant of existence roars in social gatherings ensuring a place in the "perpetual radiance" of the social organism. Such is Jinny's fractional contribution to Bernard's totality. Neville, on the other hand, asserts the potency of a vicarious masculine sharing of life and literature. "How curiously one is changed by the addition, even at a distance, of a friend. How useful an office one's friends perform when they recall us" (70-71). At the other pole of connection is the boisterous conviviality of the cricket field shared, for example, with Percival. Louis and Rhoda perform an equally vital function on the level of reconciling the self to the inevitable failures of communication with the objects of one's care and feeling.

The crucial learning incident is the death of the faceless Rhoda, in its stage setting capacity for Bernard's climactic vision. Here he learns true selflessness:

For one day as I leant over a gate that led into a field, the rhythm stopped; the rhymes and the hummings, the nonsense and the poetry. A space was cleared in my mind. I saw through the thick leaves of habit. Leaning over the gate I regretted so much litter, so much unaccomplishment and separation, for one cannot cross London to see a friend, life being so full of engagements I said life had been imperfect, an unfinished phrases. (243-244)

This is a horrifying experience, for the articulate self that had hitherto appeared inevitably through life's adventures "so mysteriously and with sudden accretion of being built up, in a beech wood, sitting by a willow tree on a bank, leaning over a parapet at Hampton Court" (244), has disappeared. "I waited. I listened. Nothing came, nothing. I cried then with a sudden conviction of complete desertion" (244). The sharer, the phrase maker, suddenly bereft, is forced to exclaim "'Look, this is the truth'" (247).

Bernard's vision is that of the androgynous artist, the inheritor of the collective unconscious. The near stranger he has been addressing in the restaurant is the audience of the writer. Even the maligned biographer is allowed to state the essential truth: "But joined 'to the sensibility of a woman ... Bernard possessed the logical sobriety of a man'" (65). In the concluding sections of the 'story' for his dinner companion, Bernard points again to the underlying symbolism of "The Mark on the Wall", asserting both his separate and composite existence, his attainment of the marriage of intellect and intuition:

I have lost in the process of eating and drinking and rubbing my eyes along surfaces that thin, hard shell which, in youth, shuts one in - hence the fierceness, and the tap, tap, tap of the remorseless beaks of the young. And now I ask, "Who am I?" I have been talking of Bernard,

Neville, Jinny, Susan, Rhoda and Louis. Am I all of them? Am I one and distinct? I do not know. (248)

Partially, at least in his glorification of solitude, he is akin to Rhoda and Louis in that his moments of vision enable him "to recall things gone far, sunk into this life or that", so that he has "dreams too, things surround" him, and "half-articulate ghosts who keep on their hauntings by day and night ... shadows of people one might have been; unborn selves" (249). It is the impersonality and objectivity of the androgynous mind to which both Bernard and Virginia Woolf aspire. As the author states elsewhere:

... the people we admire most as writers have something elusive, enigmatic, impersonal about them ... these great artists manage to infuse the whole of themselves into their works, yet contrive to universalize their identity ... in ransacking their drawers we shall find out little about them. All has been distilled into their books ... it is the imperfect artists who never manage to say the whole thing in their books, who wield the power of personality over us.⁸

Thus, Bernard is equally aware of "the eternal renewal, the incessant rise and fall and fall and rise again" (255) of life, of the sea. Out of material no more substantial than a bunch of grapes, the androgynous artist can shape a sphere to throw against the enemy, death, provided his personality balances intellect and intuition, male and female, the needs of privacy and companionship. Bernard is "the flower ... the red carnation that stood in the vase on the table of the restaurant ... a six-sided flower; made of six lives" (196). Bernard's search for "the little language such as lovers use" (254) represents an attained quest for androgynous essence, "since any emphasis either of pride or of shame, laid conspicuously upon the sex of a writer is not only irritating, but superfluous."⁹

With Bernard's achievement in mind we can begin to appreciate

the implications in Leonard Woolf's surmise: "I suspect that Virginia, though she did not believe in life after death, did believe in her life after death in The Waves, and not merely in the life of The Waves after her death."¹⁰ Yet the relationship between an autonomous artistic creation and the life that it derives from, but does not copy, is, of course, reversible. If the constructs of the androgynous mind are expressed in art, there is no inevitable transfer to life. Since Lily Briscoe, Bernard and Miss La Trobe may be taken as imaginative projections of Virginia Woolf's artistic personality, we must acknowledge the significance of Miss La Trobe's inability to achieve immediate communication. Although the pageant is a total failure, it must be remembered that Miss La Trobe, the artist in Virginia Woolf's final novel, Between the Acts, is allowed the vision of a new work, the androgynous union of the man and woman posed symbolically against the sky. However, Monique Nathan's reservation, quoted in the introduction to this thesis, can now be seen to have considerable substance.¹¹ For Virginia Woolf, the point at issue remains the gulf between artistic and personal attainment - the first achieved, the second part of an ongoing quest. With almost classical understatement she complains in the Diary: "I think the effort to live in two spheres : the novel; and life; is a strain" (209).

FOOTNOTES

Introduction

¹ Woolf, "The Novels of E.M. Forster," The Death of the Moth, 143.

² L. Woolf, Downhill All the Way, 54.

³ Brittain, Lady into Woman, 12.

⁴ Richardson, Pilgrimage, III, 502.

⁵ Proust, Remembrance of Things Past, II, 204. "Sodom and Gomorrah", which opens the Cities of the Plain section of the same volume, introduces "the men-women, descendents of those of the inhabitants of Sodom who were spared by the fire from heaven" (3).

⁶ Ibid., 24.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Brown, Life Against Death, 133.

⁹ Quoted in Glover, Freud or Jung?, 46.

¹⁰ Woolf, Contemporary Writers, 153.

¹¹ See e.g. English, A Comprehensive Dictionary of Psychological and Psychoanalytical Terms.

¹² Woolf, Contemporary Writers, 153.

¹³ Woolf, "Modern Fiction," Common Reader, I, 189.

¹⁴ Lehmann, "Working with Virginia Woolf," The Listener, LIII (1955), 61.

¹⁵ Woolf, "Women and Fiction," Granite and Rainbow, 80.

¹⁶ L. Woolf, ed., A Writer's Diary, (Hogarth, 1953), 208. Throughout the text this book will be referred to simply as Diary, and subsequent internal parenthetical references will be to this edition.

¹⁷ Woolf, "The Novels of Turgenev," The Captain's Death Bed, 54-55.

¹⁸ Woolf, Granite and Rainbow, 16-17.

¹⁹ Nathan, Virginia Woolf, 91.

CHAPTER I

¹ Ridley, "Leslie Stephen's Daughter," Dalhousie Review, XXXIII (1953), 65.

² Annan, Leslie Stephen, 29.

³ Stephen, Social Rights and Duties, II, 249-250.

⁴ Annan, Leslie Stephen, 99-100.

⁵ Stephen, Social Rights and Duties, II, 264.

⁶ Woolf, Three Guineas, 149.

⁷ Annan, Leslie Stephen, 228.

⁸ Quoted in Bell, Bloomsbury, 26.

⁹ Ibid., 42-43.

¹⁰ May, The Symbol of 'Painting' in Virginia Woolf's To the Lighthouse," Review of English Literature, VIII (1967), 98.

¹¹ Daiches, Virginia Woolf, 11.

¹² Guiget, Virginia Woolf and Her Works, 74.

¹³ Bennett, Virginia Woolf: Her Art as a Novelist, 76.

¹⁴ Ibid., 65.

¹⁵ Sackville-West, "Virginia Woolf," Horizon, III (1941), 321.

¹⁶ Blackstone, Virginia Woolf: A Commentary, 26.

¹⁷ See Hafley, The Glass Roof, 108 and elsewhere.

¹⁸ Holtby, Virginia Woolf, 200.

¹⁹ Freedman, The Lyrical Novel, 198.

²⁰ Pippett, The Moth and the Star, 286.

²¹ Burgum, The Novel and the World's Dilemma, 123.

²²Marder, Feminism and Art, 125.

²³Woolf, The Voyage Out, 253. With the exception of Between the Acts, subsequent internal references to Virginia Woolf's novels and the centrally important essay, A Room of One's Own, will be to the Penguin Modern Classics Editions.

²⁴Samuelson, "Virginia Woolf's Critical Dilemmas," Western Humanities Review, XIX (1965), 251.

²⁵Woolf, Three Guineas, 131-132.

²⁶Guiget, Virginia Woolf and Her Works, 256.

²⁷Woolf, The Captain's Death Bed, 69.

²⁸Ibid., 70.

²⁹Guiget, Virginia Woolf and Her Works, 257.

³⁰L. Woolf, Downhill All the Way, 101-102.

³¹Ibid., 116.

³²Baldanza, "Clarissa Dalloway's 'Party Consciousness'," Modern Fiction Studies, II (1956), 24.

³³Woolf, A Haunted House, 49.

³⁴Ibid., 119.

³⁵Ibid., 122-123.

³⁶Ibid., 124.

³⁷Ibid., 79.

³⁸Roberts, "'Vision and Design' in Virginia Woolf," P.M.L.A., LXI (1946), 837.

³⁹Baldanza, "Clarissa Dalloway's 'Party Consciousness'," Modern Fiction Studies, II (1956), 24.

⁴⁰See Russell, "Woolf's To the Lighthouse," The Explicator, VIII (1950), Item 38.

⁴¹Woolf, Between the Acts, Ace Edition, 131-132. Subsequent internal references will be to this edition.

⁴²Moody, Virginia Woolf, 86.

⁴³Hafley, The Glass Roof, 148.

⁴⁴Summerhayes, "Society, Morality, Analogy: Virginia Woolf's World Between the Acts," Modern Fiction Studies, IX (1963), 322.

⁴⁵Blackstone, Virginia Woolf: A Commentary, 30.

⁴⁶Ibid., 30-31.

CHAPTER II

¹Woolf, "Women Novelists," Contemporary Writers, 26.

²Dorothy Richardson provides a perhaps inevitable verbal echo, as Miriam Henderson fumes over the encyclopaedia entry for woman: "... inferior; mentally, morally, intellectually, and physically ... her development arrested in the interest of her special functions ... reverting later towards the male type ... old women with deep voices and hair on their faces ... leaving off where boys of eighteen began" (Pilgrimage, II, 220).

³Woolf, Contemporary Writers, 121.

⁴In the same essay on Dorothy Richardson, Virginia Woolf is concerned with the stylistics of the feminine sentence: "She has invented, or, if she has not invented, developed and applied to her own uses a sentence which we might call the psychological sentence of the feminine gender" (124-125).

⁵Woolf, "Women and Fiction," Granite and Rainbow, 77.

⁶Woolf, "Modern Fiction," Common Reader, I, 187.

⁷Woolf, The Captain's Death Bed, 103.

⁸Woolf, "The Art of Fiction," The Moment, 89.

⁹Ibid., 106.

¹⁰Woolf, "Modern Fiction," Common Reader, I, 190.

¹¹Woolf, "The Art of Fiction," The Moment, 108.

¹²Woolf, Downhill All the Way, 81.

¹³Woolf, "Notes on D.H. Lawrence," The Moment, 97.

¹⁴Huxley, ed., Letters, 2 June 1914, 196.

¹⁵Beal, ed., Selected Literary Criticism, 72.

¹⁶Woolf, "Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown," The Captain's Death Bed, 108.

- ¹⁷ Woolf, "An Essay in Criticism," Ibid., 90.
- ¹⁸ Samuelson, "Virginia Woolf's Critical Dilemmas," Western Humanities Review, XIX (1965), 252.
- ¹⁹ Woolf, The Moment, 82.
- ²⁰ Ibid.
- ²¹ Woolf, Contemporary Writers, 158.
- ²² Guiget, Virginia Woolf and Her Works, 276-277.
- ²³ See "The Technique of Persuasion in Orlando," Modern Fiction Studies, II (1956), 17-23.
- ²⁴ See "The Caricature Value of Parody and Fantasy in Orlando," University of Toronto Quarterly, XXX (1961), 345-366.
- ²⁵ See Baldanza, "Orlando and the Sackvilles," P.M.L.A., LXX (1955), 277.
- ²⁶ Kelsey, "Virginia Woolf and the She-Condition," Sewanee Review, XXXIX (1931), 434.
- ²⁷ Nathan, Virginia Woolf, 94.
- ²⁸ Bergson, Creative Evolution, 268.
- ²⁹ Woolf, Three Guineas, 298.
- ³⁰ Graham, "The Caricature Value of Parody and Fantasy in Orlando," University of Toronto Quarterly, XXX (1961), 353.
- ³¹ Hunting, "The Technique of Persuasion in Orlando," Modern Fiction Studies, II (1956), 22.
- ³² Hafley, The Glass Roof, 104.
- ³³ See "The Sentimental Journey," Common Reader, II, 80-81.
- ³⁴ Guiget, Virginia Woolf and Her Works, 277.
- ³⁵ Hafley, The Glass Roof, 104.
- ³⁶ Moody, Virginia Woolf, 75.
- ³⁷ Guiget, Virginia Woolf and Her Works, 312.
- ³⁸ Mellers, "Mrs. Woolf and Life," Scrutiny, VI (1937), 73.
- ³⁹ Newton, Virginia Woolf, 56.

⁴⁰Hafley, The Glass Roof, 144.

⁴¹Brewster, Virginia Woolf's London, 30.

CHAPTER III

¹Woolf, The Captain's Death Bed, 82.

²Freedman, The Lyrical Novel, 193.

³Daiches, Virginia Woolf, 70.

⁴Woolf, "The Mark on the Wall," A Haunted House and Other Short Stories, (London, 1953), 37. Subsequent parenthetical references will be to this edition.

⁵Reference has been made to the patriarchal Professor von X, castigated so venomously in A Room of One's Own. Virginia Woolf's ire finds an outlet as she "began drawing cartwheels and circles over the angry professor's face, till he looked like a burning brush or a flaming comet" (33-34).

⁶Brewster, Virginia Woolf's London, 111.

⁷Woolf, Common Reader, I, 296-297.

⁸Woodring, Virginia Woolf, 27.

⁹Woolf, Common Reader, I, 163.

¹⁰Woolf, A Haunted House, 106.

¹¹Marder, Feminism and Art, 146.

¹²See e.g. Graham, "A Negative Note on Bergson and Virginia Woolf," Essays in Criticism, VI (1956), 70-74.

¹³Daiches, Virginia Woolf, 84.

¹⁴Simon, "Some Aspects of Virginia Woolf's Imagery," English Studies, XVI (1960), 343.

¹⁵Kaehele and German, "To the Lighthouse: Symbol and Vision," Bucknell Review, X (1962), 343.

CHAPTER IV

¹Ramsay, "The Claims of Language: Virginia Woolf as Symbolist," English Fiction in Transition, IV (1961), 12.

²Havard-Williams, "Mystical Experience in Virginia Woolf's The Waves," Essays in Criticism, IV (1954), 73.

³Havard-Williams, "Perceptive Contemplation in the Work of Virginia Woolf," English Studies, XXXV (1954), 103.

⁴Murdoch, "The Sublime and Beautiful Revisited," The Yale Review, XLIX (1960), 255.

⁵Hafley, The Glass Roof, 115.

⁶Moody, Virginia Woolf, 63.

⁷Collins, Virginia Woolf's Black Arrows of Sensation, 38.

⁸Woolf, The Moment, 170-171.

⁹Woolf, "Women Novelists," Contemporary Writers, 26.

¹⁰L. Woolf, Downhill All the Way, 206.

¹¹See below, 7.

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